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MAY, 1955

# THE Liguorian

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF GOOD READING

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in the Holy Eucharist**

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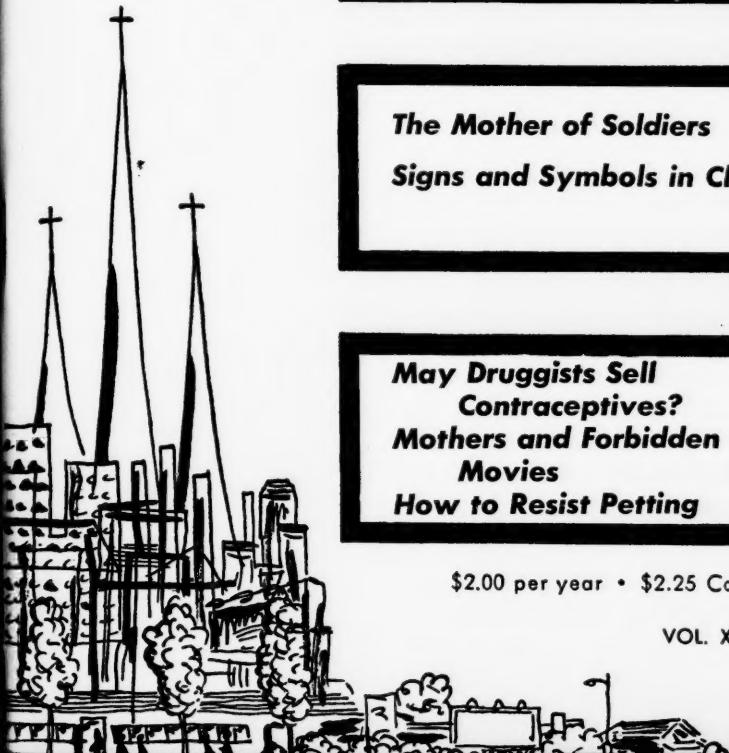
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**The Liguorian**  
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May, 1955

*a magazine for the lovers of good reading*



*Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy  
and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings*

## Why Catholics Believe in the Holy Eucharist

In Catholics, this half-study, half-meditation should awaken a new sense of gratitude to Christ, to say nothing of new devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. In non-Catholics, it should awaken questions that will never be silenced till the answers are found.

*Donald F. Miller*

**I**F I were not a Catholic, but belonged to any one of the two hundred and fifty or more sects that count themselves as Christians, and if I knew anything about the history of Christianity, I feel sure that the one thing that would most disturb my mind would be the presence of the tabernacle in all Catholic churches and its absence in mine.

I say that the knowledge of the history of Christianity would cause my disturbance for this reason. For fifteen hundred years, the Mass as understood today by Catholics, Holy Communion believed to be the reception of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the true presence of Christ in the tabernacle whenever the consecrated Hosts were kept there, were the very heart and life and center of the Christian religion as known in the Catholic Church.

Only in the middle fifteen hundreds, did men come along who doubted or denied these three things: the Mass

as the sacrifice of Christ, Holy Communion as the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ, and the real presence of Christ under the appearances of bread on the altar. Only then, after more than fifteen hundred years of unbroken belief and practice, did men, who professed to be Christians, begin to say that Christ never intended the Mass to be offered, never wanted His Body and Blood to be taken as spiritual food, never wished to remain in the tabernacles of His churches under the appearances of bread.

I would say to myself: Either Christ, the omnipotent and all-wise Son of God, allowed His followers to be grossly deceived for fifteen hundred years, or the modern founders of Christian sects and all their followers have been terribly misled. I could not possibly assent to the former; Christ could not be the Son of God made man Who came to redeem and to teach all mankind, and then permit such horrible blunders to be made in

His name for generation after generation up to a period of fifteen hundred years. I would be certain that it must be these modern teachers, who first denied the Mass and Communion and the real presence of God on the altar as recently as only a few hundred years ago, who fell under the deception.

So I would look for a Church that accepted the same Mass and the same Communion and the same real presence as were the very life of the only Christian Church for fifteen hundred years. When I found it, I would know that I had found an unbroken line of teaching and practice back to the incarnate Person of Jesus Christ.

This, then, seems to me to be the sharpest difference between the Catholic Church and all other religions that call themselves Christian. There is no getting around it or over it or melting it down or arguing it away. The Catholic Church has the Mass, Holy Communion, the real presence of Christ in its tabernacles; the others (barring one or the other that is trying to bring them back) have not. The Catholic Church, in clinging to these three things, is in accord with fifteen hundred unbroken years of belief and practice beginning with the first followers of Christ. All the other Churches must say that their founders decreed, just a few hundred years ago, that fifteen centuries of Christianity, beginning with the first, persisted in the most horrible darkness and evident error.

I say that this historical cleavage between the Catholic Church and all other Christian religions would strike me most forcibly if I were a non-Catholic. I think it would lead me into a deeper study of Christ's own words and deeds. I would look up exactly what He said about the Mass and

Communion and His presence in a sacramental form. I would find the following clear proofs that it was no mistake or blunder that the first fifteen centuries of Christianity looked upon the Holy Eucharist as the very heart of the religion of Christ.

#### I. Christ's Presence in the Eucharist

It is unbelievably strange that so many believers in Christ who accept the Bible as their sole source of knowledge about Christ and about His will, can reject the clear meaning of oft-repeated statements of Christ about the Eucharist to be found in their own Bibles. We say "oft-repeated" because it is apparent that Christ Himself knew that unless He made this astounding doctrine clear by saying it over and over again in different words all having the same meaning, even the best-intentioned of His followers would refuse to accept it.

His first recorded statements about His presence in the Eucharist were made by way of a promise. He wanted to prepare men's minds for this gift, and for the supreme test of their faith that it would involve, before actually bestowing it. He even prepared men "for the preparation," i.e., for the promise of the Eucharist, by special miracles.

He multiplied a few loaves of bread into enough to feed five thousand people, and He walked across the waters of the Lake of Tiberias during a storm as if He were walking on dry land. Looking back now, we can see a pre-arranged pattern in these two miracles. He was soon to announce the multiplication of His own presence under the appearance of bread and wine; the visible multiplication of the material bread would make it easier for men to believe in the new but invisible miracle. And His walking on the waters

of a storm-lashed lake would help them to realize that He could transport Himself whithersoever he pleased contrary to the laws of nature.

It was very shortly after these two miracles that He promised to give Himself as food and drink to all mankind. The words of the promise are recorded in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, verses 48 to 59. It is common for those who have rejected the doctrine of Christ's true presence in the Eucharist to say that all these words are but a figure of speech; that Christ is merely talking in an impressive manner about the importance of "believing" in Him. But Christ's repetitions of the same simple statement that He will give men His flesh and blood to eat and drink, His comparison of this fact with the manna that fell in the desert and saved the Jews from starvation, His answer to objections that He was promising an impossible thing, His laying down of the law that all must eat His flesh and drink His blood, all make impossible the interpretation that He is here speaking in figurative language.

Here, then, are the exact words of Our Lord on this occasion. Note that in no less than ten different ways does He say the same thing, viz., that He will give His flesh and His blood to be consumed, as food to those who believe in Him.

*"I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."*

*"The Jews therefore strove among*

*themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*

*"Then Jesus said to them: Amen, Amen, I say to you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever."*

On no other subject, on no other occasion, did Christ pile up more repetitions, or continue to belabor a simple theme so long, as on this when He promised to give Himself as food to His people. And it is noteworthy that, despite the repetitions and the belaborings, despite the answer He gave to the voiced objections from the crowd, there were still some on that very day who turned against Him saying: "This saying is hard, and who can hear it?" They obviously knew what He meant; it was just too much for their spiritually weak souls to believe.

As a key matches a lock, so do the words that Christ spoke at the last supper match the promise that He had given in the Gospel of St. John recorded above. Two simple concepts run through that promise; the one is the truth that Christ Himself will be the bread, the food, the meat and drink of the faithful who believe in Him; the other is the correlative truth that the faithful will consume Him, will "eat" Him, will be nourished by His Body and His Blood.

These two simple truths find their echo and their fulfillment in the words in which Christ actually changed bread and wine into His body and blood at the last supper, and commanded His apostles to do the same thing to the end of time. The words are simple, factual, assertive, commanding. There is again no chance of a figure of speech, or of a hidden meaning that only a few men would ever find. As St. Matthew tells the story of the last supper and the first Communion, this is what Christ did and said:

*"And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed and broke and gave it to His disciples and said: Take ye and eat, This is My body."*

*"And taking the chalice He gave thanks and gave it to them saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins."*

Beyond all doubt the apostles then remembered the promise that had sent many of Christ's followers away from Him. "I am the bread of heaven . . . I am the living bread come down from heaven . . . My flesh is meat indeed; my blood is drink indeed . . . He that eateth this bread shall live forever." Now the promise was fulfilled; what they had wondered about and perhaps argued about before was now made clear. "This is My body; take ye and eat. This is My blood; take ye and drink."

St. Paul was permitted by Christ (Who Himself taught him in a desert-retreat) to have no doubts about the clear and factual meaning of what He had done at the last supper. In his first letter to the Corinthians, chapter II, he re-describes the scene; then he

adds the command of Christ that the apostles were to do the same thing, and their successors after them to the end of time. Further still, he reveals that anybody who unworthily "eateth and drinketh" the body and blood of the Lord, "eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."

To one who studies this vast body of Scriptural evidence carefully, there is nothing surprising in the fact that every century of Christianity up to the sixteenth shows the Church centering all her activities around this tremendously important action and command of Christ. The only wonder is that a time could come when men would find it in their minds and hearts to say: "It was all a mistake. For fifteen hundred years men have been deluded. Christ never gave His body and blood to be consumed."

And what compounds one's amazement still more is the wild variety of interpretations that they began to give to all the above texts, once they accepted the new notion that the fifteen-hundred-year-old belief in the exact meaning of the Saviour's words was a lamentable mistake. They had to explain in some way the words of Christ: "Take ye and eat; this is My body. Take ye and drink; this is My blood." They had to say, "He did not mean that the bread He held in His hands was now His body, nor the wine in the chalice His blood. He meant that these things were a memento of His body and blood; or a symbol, or a reminder or an image or a figure or a commemoration." So in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, they bandied about different interpretations, so much so that scholars list about two hundred different notions of the meaning of the words, "This is My body," as proposed by

different men who rejected the plain, simple, direct meaning of the words. They would not have it that Christ meant, "This is My body;" they insisted that they had to add words to Christ's to prove that He meant something other than He said.

## II. What Christ's Presence Means.

It is therefore necessary to learn what the first fifteen centuries of Christianity held and practiced concerning the Eucharist, and what the one Church that has retained that full teaching and practice today holds, to be sure that one has the mind and the intent and the full gift of Christ Himself. And any cursory study of those past centuries and of the Catholic Church today, combined with simple acceptance of Christ's words, reveals that He meant the Eucharist to mean three things to all the faithful.

### 1. First, it was meant to make the altar and the Mass the heart of the Christian religion.

In all the recorded testimonies of the Gospel-writers, Christ, in changing the bread and wine into His body and blood referred in some way to His body as it would be sacrificed or His blood as it would be shed for the redemption of mankind. Moreover, when He commanded the apostles to do what He had just done, He told them clearly, as St. Paul points out, that in so doing "they would show the death of the Lord until He come." In other words, the transformation of the bread and wine into His body and blood would be a sacrifice, a re-offering of His death, in an unbloody manner, for the sins of the world.

So for fifteen hundred years before the Protestant revolt against the authority of the Church and the Mass, and right down to this day and this hour in the Catholic Church, the altar

has been essential and the fulfillment of Christ's command that "His death be shown" by the changing of bread and wine into His body and blood has been the central feature of Christian worship. This has come to be called the Mass, but the name does not matter. Every time an ordained priest bends over the altar with bread and wine in his hands and pronounces the words Christ said and commanded His apostles and their successors to say, the victimized body and blood of Christ became present on the altar, and the death of Christ is shown to the world once more. And every informed Catholic knows that by offering this sacrifice called the Mass with the priest, he fulfills his first obligation of adoring God, making atonement for sin, thanking God for His gifts, and asking God for His graces.

### 2. Second, it was meant to make the altar railing and Holy Communion the highest possible means of a soul's uniting itself with God.

You cannot find a single Catholic Church in the world today without a place assigned where the believers in Christ can receive Holy Communion. You could not find one without this same feature for fifteen hundred years before the first man denied the presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. This is because the Church has never doubted what Christ said: "I am the living bread come down from heaven. . . I will give you My flesh to eat and My blood to drink. . . Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man . . you shall not have life in you. . . Take ye and eat; this is My body."

Thus, too, the frequency of a person's reception of the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion is, by and large, and has always been, a fairly accurate test of his love of

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Christ and desire to be faithful to Him. Just as the most important break with the mother-Church of Christianity on the part of the so-called reformers was the rejection of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, so the first step away from true loyalty to Christ on the part of a Catholic in any age is that of drifting away from regular reception of Holy Communion.

*3. Third, it was meant to make the tabernacle in every Catholic Church the abiding place of Christ, in whose presence His followers might bask and rejoice and meditate and pray.*

When Christ said, over the bit of bread He held in His hands at the last supper, "This is My body," His body took the place of the substance of the bread and remained until the apostles consumed what appeared to be bread, and until the appearances or accidents of bread disappeared. So today, when a priest pronounces the words, "This is My body," as Christ

commanded him to do, the bread becomes the Body of Christ until it no longer possesses the appearance and the accidents of bread. So when, during Mass, the priest places consecrated Hosts inside the tabernacle on the altar, all Catholics believe, as all Christians believed for fifteen hundred years, that Christ is really and truly present within that tabernacle, inviting His people to come and commune with Him there.

That is why Catholic churches are gathering places for the faithful, not only when services are being conducted, but at all times. That is why in some fervent parishes, the people have arranged that at least one of their number be present in the church at all times, i.e., for the whole twenty-four hours of the day. For the Church is Christ's home, in which His children can always find solace and inspiration, the joy and delight of knowing that they are close to God.

## The Growth of Catholic Hospitals

*The Banner* quotes figures recently released of the expenditures made by seventy-one Catholic hospitals last year on construction projects, which give some idea of the growth of these institutions and the cost of that growth.

The total construction cost was \$30,652,000, of which \$6,648,000 was contributed by the federal government or state governments. Seventy-nine projects, which were unfinished at the end of 1952, were estimated to cost \$118,496,000. Of this amount, not more than nineteen per cent will be paid through federal or state aid.

Only about one-half of the 834 Catholic hospitals responded to the survey questionnaire, so that a conservative estimate of the total outlay of all is about \$170,000,000, and when we remember the huge sums required to equip these hospitals, it is fair to say that \$200,000,000 will represent the outlay for projects now under way.

## Undespoiled

There was one kind of wealth of which rapacious conquerors could never despoil Ireland, the wealth of faith and good humor. While England was losing her name "Merry England," . . . while she was choosing as her national poem "Paradise Lost," Ireland, with a smile on her lips, knew that she still possessed heaven and the sky above.

*Paul Claudel*

# Problems of Professional People

## May A Druggist Sell Contraceptives?

**Problem:** May a Catholic druggist keep contraceptives in stock and sell them to customers who request them? Or, at least, may a Catholic drug-clerk sell contraceptives?

**Solution:** These are very practical questions in our day, when contraceptives of all kinds, both mechanical and chemical, are regarded as articles that can be purchased in any drug-store. Many Catholics have taken up the pharmaceutical profession, after spending a considerable time in study, and naturally they wish to be successful in their business. Some of these men, after they have set up their own business, argue that if they do not keep contraceptives in stock for customers who desire to purchase them, they will be forced out of business, or at least will be restricted to a very meager profit. Hence, they conclude, they may lawfully keep and sell these articles.

Now, while sympathy is due to these Catholic pharmacists because of the difficult dilemma in which they find themselves, their judgment in this matter must be regarded as erroneous. If they wish to be consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church, they may not keep for sale any devices or chemicals which are intended exclusively for contraception. Any drugs that are regularly used for lawful purposes may be kept and sold, even though they may also have contraceptive efficacy, and the druggist need not inquire of those who buy them what their purpose may be. But those instruments, jellies, antiseptics, etc., which are normally used only for contraception may not be sold by the Catholic drug-store owner, if he wishes to keep his soul free from mortal sin. This is the unanimous teaching of Catholic theologians in their treatment of this problem under the general heading of co-operation.

Co-operation in the sin of another may be *formal* (a participation in the sinful act) or *material* (an action which in itself is not immoral, but nevertheless aids toward the other's sin). Formal co-operation is never allowed; material co-operation is permissible only when there is a reason to justify it, proportionate to the measure of the co-operation. Now, as Catholic theologians teach, the co-operation of the drug-store owner who sells contraceptives is either formal, or, if it is material, is so efficacious that it cannot be justified, even though he must go out of business in the event that he stops selling these articles.

However, some theologians pass a more lenient decision on the drug-store clerk, i.e., a hired hand who does not own the store. When he sells a contraceptive instrument or chemical to a customer, he is indeed a material co-operator toward the sin that this person will commit. Nevertheless, since the clerk is acting in a subordinate position and has no discretionary authority over what is sold in the store, his co-operation is much less efficacious than that of the owner. Accordingly, for a very grave reason the clerk may work in a store where these articles are sold and hand them out to those who purchase them. Such a very grave reason would be the realization that otherwise he will lose his job and will not be able to procure another good situation.

It should be added that a Catholic drug-store owner could not adopt the

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policy of selling contraceptives only to non-Catholics, on the ground that these persons do not believe that contraception is sinful. The Catholic knows it is sinful, and he must regulate his own conduct accordingly, no matter what others may think.

Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D.,  
Catholic University of America.

## ***For Wives and Husbands Only***

***Donald F. Miller***

### **Mothers and Forbidden Movies**

**Problem:** I have a sister who has three children, the oldest of whom is fourteen. She insists on taking all three of them to see many of the movies listed by the Legion of Decency as objectionable in part. When anyone remonstrates with her, she defends herself by saying that the objectionable parts of the picture make no impression on the children, and she has already convinced them that they need not worry about attending any movie they wish. Am I scrupulous in feeling very upset about my sister's conduct in this regard?

**Solution:** You have very good reason to be sad about your sister's conduct and attitude, and about the harm she is doing to her children, but you have no reason to be scrupulous about it. Your obligation as a sister is to try in new ways to convince her of the wrongness of her practice; if that fails to change her, or if she becomes even more stubborn the more you talk to her, then you can only keep her in your prayers that God's grace may change her.

It may help you in phrasing your advice to your sister to consider these facts. She, and all the Catholics who have a similar attitude of laxity toward movies that have been condemned in whole or in part, are victims of secularism. This means that they go down the line with the principles of the world even when they are opposed to the principles of Christ and of the natural law of God. One of the principles of the world today is that nobody has the right to censor or interfere with any form of amusement or entertainment that is made available to people. According to this principle, a Catholic diseased by secularism feels that he may read anything, attend any stage shows or movies, take part in obscene conversations, because these are popular with the world.

Christ teaches, on the contrary, that anything in the world, no matter how popular, must be avoided if it is in any sense an occasion of sin. When movies are classified as objectionable in part, it is made known to Catholics that these pictures are apt to be an occasion of sin for them, unless for some special reason a person knows beforehand that a certain B picture can be seen without danger. But this much is certain, that a mother would commit a serious sin if she would take her children to any and all B pictures that came along, and teach them that they need not worry at all about the rulings of the Legion of Decency.

# I Watch Television

There is humor in the newly developed television manners of some families, but there is also latent danger and even tragedy. Read this and do some thinking.

*Francis M. Lee*

FOR a while, it had been real nice. Everyone just sitting around and singing the old time songs. Then Junior, aged five, broke it wide open. He wanted to sing "FAB." That's a soap commercial, friends. Nobody knew "FAB." None of us oldsters knew "FAB," that is. Little Mary Ellen, aged 4, knew the complete libretto, so together they did "FAB." We went home a little shaken. How about that? Were the musical reins passing over into younger hands?

Definitely, the small fry are not singing hymns learned at mother's knee. I remember leaning on the sewing machine, some thirty-five years ago, while my mother sewed away and sang some old heart-twister such as, "Break the news to mother; tell her there is no other." Today that would probably end up "J-E-L-L-O."

Can't you just see the gang out at a picnic twenty years from now, singing all the old favorites? "Dial Soap," "Colonial Bread," "White Rain Shampoo"?

"Hey, Hank, give me a tenor on 'Robert Hall Clothes.' Okay, now boys, soft . . . "

Today is Saturday, and all around the nation the kids are glued to the television set. If they are old enough to sit up, they are there, sir. Faces blanked out. Just a couple sets of eyes hanging from the ceiling. Maybe one side of the room is burning, but it

hasn't reached the TV set yet, so they sit there, glued.

I saw one little fellow taking swigs from a soda bottle during a half hour program. When the show was over, the bottle was still full. Junior hadn't noticed that the cap was on.

Years from now, after a generation has squinted into their television sets, short stories will begin something like this;

Roy Rogers Johnson finished cleaning his thick barrel-lensed glasses and looked lovingly over at his wife, Betty Furness Johnson, who was rocking the baby to sleep. She was crooning to the tiny bit of humanity:

"Get a Chevrolet. See the U.S.A."

Roy felt expansive. He got up, went over to his wife, took off her thick barrel-lensed glasses and cleaned them for her. In a mood, he went on upstairs, greeted his other children, and then cleaned the thick barrel-lensed glasses of Kukla Johnson, aged seven, Howdy Doody Johnson, aged five, and little Red Skelton Johnson, aged three.

"How's for a day in the park?" says dad, peering at them with love through his thick barrel-lensed glasses.

"Fine," cry all, and they run for their little portable television sets, their tinted thick barrel-lensed glasses, their outdoor-television-suits, and downstairs they cascade.

Mother has little Space Johnson, the baby, all bundled in his new tele-

vision blanket, and away they go. As they drive along, little Howdy Doody Johnson asks:

"Daddy, what was baseball?"

\*

Of course, TV does have some good results for the kids. They can always be counted on when dad has to spell cavalcade, aluminum, directed, produced, designed, bargain, studio, one, four, cheese, marriage, divorce, re-marriage, peanut butter, colossal, spectacular, and suds. Spell them, nothing! They can sell them.

They also know how to feel downright sorry for the nice lady on television who really is not understood by her fourth husband, and they think she has every right in the world to get a divorce. It said so.

Thus, an adder in the family bosom.

Visual education is top bracket today, and it should be. So the children learn that divorce is wrong in their catechism, but it surely looks sensible and indicated in the very visual carryings-on of a television play. What goes on in those little brains when such tripe is stretched across the TV screen, and dubious linen is hung on the line? Can that pretty lady be wrong? Really?

A fine educator once said, "Give me a child until he is seven years old, and I will answer for his soul." We realize his truth when we remember that the young child's mind is as soft as wax, taking in and completely reacting to every impression. When those impressions grow cold in the mould, they will settle into the convictions of later years. One shudders. Look to it, parents. What un-named fairy godmother, think ye, censors out the scenes, dialogues, situations, insinuations, that could harm your six-year-old child?

Face it, you have a pretty tricky little gadget in your house, chief. May-

be you are twisting more than a dial; maybe it is a young mind that you are twisting. Let us not underestimate the pull of this visual education business. If King Henry had never seen Ann Boleyn, England would probably be Catholic today.

Nor do we mean to confine ourselves to the very young. Adolescents eagerly seek for an adult pattern in living. They believe it will give them security as an established person who should be accepted in society. But what kind of pattern is being served up to them day by day on the TV screen? They watch a problem develop in a play, and sit there drinking in the solution of that problem. Maybe the author is atheistic, amoral, never heard of the ten commandments, but he does present a pattern, a design, a solution for some difficulty in life. Within the same year or week, the teen-ager may be suddenly faced with the same difficulty, the same problem. What do you think he will do, run back to the catechism and see what his faith says, or simply do what the hero did in that TV drama? He has unconsciously created standards of judgment and decision as he sat before the screen. Can he now throw them off?

So we get around to the fact that mother and father had better sit down and have a long talk over this bulging TV thing and its effluvia. All over the nation, the channels are multiplying. A lot of worthwhile presentations are given; likewise, a lot of the aforesaid tripe. It seems doubtful if any national censoring board could ever cope with the endless flow of material, and after some recent decisions by supposedly responsible censors as to what is improper, 'tis time for the Christian mother and father quietly to map out their own family's TV program. Cer-

tainly, they should be willing to do so. If they found a book of improper stories or pictures in the possession of their child, they would paddle Junior a country mile, and toss the book back into the garbage can whence it came. Yet, Junior sits at TV, taking on all comers, absorbing impression after impression, grinding the good and the bad in his little mill.

They are your children. Look to it. You have the authority from God. Conversely, you are responsible to God.

The temptation to remark upon the commercials is simply too great. We pass over the rather heady amount and recurrence of these advertisements, wondering, withal, if such multiplicity does not defeat its own purpose. When a whole group of people groan as the commercial reappears for the fourth time in a fifteen minute program, does the sponsor really think that he is buying good will for his product? He may be working on the theory that if enough mud is thrown, some of it must stick. But he is not selling mud. Is his product not fine enough to chance the restrained dignity found in some few programs, where the sponsor relies on the native strength of his name and the quality of his house? He certainly demands respect, and gathers even greater dignity when compared to the thrower of much mud. He feeds on their ebullience. And he gives dad no chance to go back to the sport sheet.

Verily, however, some of us are becoming confused by the commercials. A TV play begins with mother cooking over her stove as she talks to her escaped-convict son, who is having a little gumbo at the kitchen table. She is begging him with tears to give up the loot. Just then you turn away to swat a fly, and when you look

back, lo, mother is at the stove in an evening gown, and is talking Fahrenheit, ragout, and prices. Suddenly she wants to sell her boy the stove? Nope, that's the commercial. You just let those flies be.

And there are the commercials that jump out at you just when the suspense is getting hideous. The camera pans you into the rifle's telescopic sight as the hero draws a bead on the bad guy; you follow the villain across the lawn, he raises his dagger above the unsuspecting prince; the hero presses the trigger, and WHAMMY! GO TO FELSINGORE FOR YOUR NEXT USED TRICYCLE! ! ! ! DON'T BE HALF SAFE: BE TRI-SAFE! ! ! ! OPEN TONIGHT UNTIL THREE O'CLOCK TOMORROW MORNING! ! ! ! 1516 OLIVE STREET. GOT THAT? WRITE IT DOWN!!! DID YOU HEAR ME? WRITE IT DOWN! ! ! ! 1516 O-L-I-V-E S-T-R-E-E-T. JUST ASK FOR SMILEY FELSINGORE! ! ! ! The picture comes back on. The villain is staggering, falling, fell. That bullet must have gone around the world.

Television has quite dismissed the gentle art of conversation. An evening social visit might now be unfavorably compared to a couple of stone age dwellers getting together for an evening's grunting in the cave. You ring the doorbell, and after quite a while, dad has twisted little Sid's arm until he finally leaves the TV set and opens the door. You step in. Little Sid is already back in the cave. You peer into the dark for a few minutes and finally decide to go toward the voices. You take five steps into the living room, trip on someone's leg, and you are down, your face between your host's legs, and your elbow in your new Homburg hat. About par for the

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course, although most visitors do not knock over as many glasses as you did.

Your host says, "Hello, Henry, with you in a minute. Ha ha, just want to see if the cops nab this guy."

You lie there in the dark, thinking it over, or just watching the cops nab the guy. Just before they nab him, naturally the commercial comes on. Lights go up.

"Henry, you old dog, how are you? Get up and let me look at you. New hat, eh?"

"How sweet of you to come by, Henry," says your hostess. "How is Ruth?" (At this moment the commercial ends.)

"She dropped dead this afternoon. I came by to tell you that the funeral is Thursday."

Hostess (watching you know what): "Oh, how nice! Tell her I will phone her. My, just look at that gunfight! Sidney, isn't it your bedtime? It's after midnight, dear."

Just leave anytime, pal. They'll

never know.

Let's not become slaves to television, and again, let us not be so naive as to think that television is geared to the ideals and principles by which we must live and be judged by God. Perhaps, we can tie up the whole thing in one neat little package, by recalling a story of some years ago. A certain husband was rooting around the upstairs of his home, trying to get dressed for an evening out. Finally, he called to his wife:

"Honey, is this shirt I wore today all right for tonight?"

With a gentle wisdom, his wife's answer came up to him:

"If it's doubtful, it's dirty."

So let us not abysmally squirm around on the divan when the television play gets doubtful, and we are wondering how the children are taking it. Get up and turn it off. You will not only save money on electricity; you will also find out if the kids still speak English.

### Prize Prayer

"I have said many foolish things in my life, My God, to You, to men and to myself. I wish to thank you now, not for the reasonable prayers which I have poured forth to You and which You have answered, but for the ridiculous prayers which I have multiplied and which Your goodness has refused to notice. I thank You for not having listened to me, when I demanded for myself privileged treatment, and when I wished to draw You into pleasant paths chosen by my laziness. I entreated You; and You, full of mercy, refused to hear Me. Your severity, perhaps, will succeed in making me love what is strong.

Pierre Charles, S.J.

### General of the Armies of God

During the Marian Year we should call to mind the two significant titles given to the Blessed Virgin by St. Louis de Montfort. He calls her General of the Armies of God and Exterminator of His enemies. Two great armies are now drawn up in battle formation.

Not long ago, in China, a communist general said to Father Robert Greene, M.M.:

"So you're the chosen of God. Well, we're the picked troops of satan . . . WE'LL SEE WHO WINS."

Happiness holds on to what it happens to have; discontent wants all the rest.

# The Mother of Soldiers

A war-time incident that brought home to many a soldier a tremendous truth in the midst of the death and destruction wrought by a bombardment of shells.

*Ernest F. Miller*

**T**HREE is a certain country in a certain part of the world where the faith of the people has expressed itself in wayside shrines. There are shrines all over the country, almost as many in number as the advertising signs that dot the landscape in America.

On the top of a mountain peak there is a cross so huge that it seems to merge with the sky. In the middle of a field there is a tremendous statue of the Sacred Heart that is so realistic that it seems almost to breathe. Dominating the busiest public square of almost every town and city is a stone or wooden likeness of the town's or city's patron saint.

But one of the most beautiful wayside shrines of the country is one dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a statue carved out of the purest marble by the hands of an artist whose name is completely forgotten.

The story is that the artist carved the statue in thanksgiving to the Virgin for some great favor that she had granted him; and that it was his desire and command that his name should never be known. The statue was to be

his masterpiece, his finest work. But no one in all the world was ever to learn that it was he who made it. It was his free-will offering to God's mother. And he was determined that no recompense should or would be given him in the form of posterity's acclamation.

The statue stands alongside a dusty road, open to the elements of heat and cold and rain and shine, but still more open to the prayers and the pleadings of the sick and the sinful and the suffering. It is of heroic size, the arms extended in appeal, its eyes filled with an indescribable love and longing, the face beautiful beyond compare. Even in winter one may see fresh flowers at the foot of the statue; at all times one may see people kneeling there, the high and the mighty as well as the poor and the lowly amongst them.

In the course of the second world war much of this country was destroyed. Nor were the wayside shrines spared. They fell too, just as did the buildings and the crops and the trees that surrounded them. But the statue I have described was not disturbed. Not so much as a particle of its marble was chipped off. Not so much as a finger of a hand was touched. Mary stood there, arms extended, the smile on her lips, as though no power in the world was great enough to drive her from her appointed place, which was in the midst of men, soothing them, succoring them, saving them.

Well, it so happened that as the war wore on, the Americans finally arrived in the country. They brought all their weapons with them, and their mechanical skills and their genius for speed and efficiency. It was believed by all that hostilities would not last much longer now. No enemy could withstand the mountain of material that was being built up for the last

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and final attack. The belief was not unfounded. In a short time the enemy was on the run — what was left of the enemy — and it was only a question of time until the rout and the collapse would be complete.

One day a small detachment of American troops was on its way up to the front. Vehicles had carried the men as far as it was safe for vehicles to go. Then the men dismounted in order to make the last part of the trip on foot. It was not very far. Perhaps a couple of miles. But it was within those two or three miles that the shrine of the Blessed Virgin was located. The men would have to pass it to arrive at their destination.

As the Lord would have it, just when the detachment came opposite the statue, the order was given for the men to fall out until a thorough reconnaissance could be made of the terrain and territory ahead. There was no sense in plunging into an area that might be filled with enemy patrols or even enemy units only waiting for the brash and careless Americans to step into a fatal trap. At least there were mines in the vicinity. These had to be spotted and a path cleared between them before the troops could think of moving forward.

On receiving the order to halt and to be at ease, the men immediately sought the refuge of the ground and relaxed. They could not help but notice the huge statue so close to them. In fact, some of them lay in its very shadow. The Catholic soldiers were reminded by it to say a prayer to the Blessed Virgin for her protection in the danger that was now so imminent. But they said the prayer inside their hearts. They did not want to make a show of their religion.

The other men just lay on the

ground and rested and looked up at the statue. They were neither for nor against wayside shrines. They thought that such things were O.K. if you had been taught to believe in them. Back home they were taught not to believe in them, except in such sacred shrines as the place where Washington was buried and the tomb of Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois.

But you had to admit, they thought, that some of the shrines here in this country were really beautiful. For example, this one of the Virgin. With its arms reaching out as if beckoning a child to be embraced. There was hardly anything at home more beautiful. It seemed to be almost alive. And there was that look of compassion and of sadness on the face that it would take many words to describe. It was too bad that so beautiful a statue had to be so close to the battle lines. It belonged in a church or in a museum or some place far back where people were not shooting at each other with bullets.

Of course, the American soldiers did not express these sentiments out loud. But more than one of them had these sentiments as they lay there on the ground. It would not have taken too much argument to prove to all of them that wayside shrines had a point in spite of what some people said against them. It was in their power to do a lot of good if they were looked on and used in the right way.

At least this wayside shrine made a lot of sense. The lady standing there so gracefully and with such dignity represented just about everything that was good and fine and true and worth living for in life, and even everything worth dying for, too, if necessary. A statue like that and the thing that it represented could push a man on to

do some pretty heroic things.

When you looked upon it in that light, a wayside shrine, at least this wayside shrine, was a good thing to have around. It sort of lifted up a fellow when he needed a lift pretty badly. And right now a lift was needed. When you do not know how much longer you are going to live, you look pretty sharp around you for things to help and things to hang onto. It was quite certain that somebody here was making his last journey. You cannot go into the front yard of the enemy without somebody getting hurt. Getting hurt in time of war often means getting killed.

So, they lay in the shadow of the statue of the Mother of God and rested and waited. Most of them smoked. A few of them acted as though they were asleep. Of course, they were not asleep. There wasn't much talk.

And then it happened. All of a sudden and from out of a clear sky there fell upon the entire neighborhood of the statue a terrific barrage of shells. Apparently the enemy had seen the men come, had waited until they all got nicely stretched out on the ground and away from their guns, and at that moment gave it to them with all the firepower they had. It was terrible. The shells fell like rain-drops in a heavy storm.

For quite some time nothing at all could be seen. The air was filled with smoke and dust. Nor could anything be heard but the groans and the cries of the wounded and the dying. No orders were given by the officers. It was one of those times in life when nothing human could be done to remedy a situation that had been rendered almost inhuman by the force of the calamity that had taken place.

Finally the barrage came to an end.

Finally the dust and the smoke cleared away. Finally the men who survived could look around them and behold the damage that had been done. It was almost unbelievable. But there was only one thing that they really saw, one thing that stood out as the sun stands out in the heavens. And that one thing was this: the broken and battered and dead body of one of the American soldiers, lying outstretched in the arms of the statue of the Blessed Virgin. It was as though someone had very tenderly and lovingly laid the body there, as though this body were a special one and needed particular care and attention, and so was put where that particular care and attention could be given.

Oh, yes, the body was dead. There was no doubt about that. A soldier can tell at a glance. He has seen it often enough not to be deceived. The boy was dead. But it did not seem to make so much difference now. There was something about the way he lay there in arms of the Blessed Mother that took some of the sting out of it. He just seemed to be O.K., as if nobody would have to worry about him anymore.

Stranger still, the look of compassion on the face of the holy Virgin seemed to be more pronounced than it had been before. And the statue itself! It had not been touched in the midst of all the explosions and flying shrapnel. The ground was torn up as if it had been excavated; the trees and shrubbery looked as if they had been stripped and broken and splintered by giant hands. Nothing escaped except the statue, the lady. And she held in her arms the bleeding body of the American soldier. She, the mother once more, was holding the body of her son, her dead son, in her arms.

Many of the soldiers seemed to

recognize this. They lay there on the ground because they could not get up; or they stood there, covered with dirt and some of them with blood. But all of them understood now as they looked there in silence and in wonder at the statue with the precious burden in its arms. This was truly the lady's place — up here on the edge of the battlefield. Nothing — no shell, no bullet, no bayonet, no charging tank could touch her. But lots of things could touch her sons — her soldier sons. And that was exactly what she was — the mother of soldiers, the

mother of brave men who came out to the battlefield to die. It was her job to overlook the battlefield, to keep her arms open to catch the falling bodies and the flying souls of her soldier-sons as they toppled from their crosses of pain and death.

Indeed there was a reason for this statue to be right where it was. Even the Protestant soldiers knew it now. And they hoped that she would be that close if the day ever came when they would be needing a heart to lean against and arms in which to be encircled.

***Prejudice is Fear***

Mr. Joseph Clayton, the eminent sociologist, in a diagnosis of prejudice, says, as quoted in the *Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament*:

"Fear is probably at the root of this aversion from knowledge, as it is at the root of so many of our prejudices, political, social and economic alike. How else explain the fury of the persecution of the sixteenth century, and the struggle to extirpate the old religion in the lands where the Protestant Churches were established, save by the utterance of the ex-Catholic priest, John Knox: 'One Mass was more fearful to him than ten thousand armed enemies.'

"And for Knox, as for the rulers of the newly established Church of England, the only way to stop people from going to Mass was to stop the saying of the Mass.

"If today there is less fear among Protestants of attendance at Mass, there is still very great fear of instruction in the doctrine of the Mass. It is not the ignorance that is invincible, it is the prejudice—the prejudice rooted in the fear lest a study of the Church and its teaching will persuade to conversion, and that such conversion may result in much inconvenience in temporal matters."

***Cure-All***

When Dr. Herman Boerhave, a renowned Dutch physician, died at his home in Amsterdam in 1738, a sealed book containing one hundred pages was found among his effects. The title was "The Only and Deepest Secrets of the Medical Art," and when it was put up for sale at auction it brought a fabulous price,—ten thousand dollars in gold. The buyer broke the seal eagerly and found to his amazement, ninety-nine blank pages.

There was something written on one of the pages . . . a message of fifteen words, the doctor's deepest secret, this "legacy prescription" written in his own handwriting. It read:

"Keep your head cool and your feet warm, and you'll make the best doctor poor."

*Banner*

# How Lies Become Propaganda

Much of the religious bigotry in the world gets its start from highly publicized lies. Here are a couple of examples, to one of which the news-magazine *Time* gave its support.

*John E. Doherty*

THE era of sectarian strife in this country shows signs of coming to an end. Bitter polemics, with charge and countercharge between Catholic and Protestants, may soon be a part of past history. For Catholics, this is a pleasing prospect; they seek for their faith only that its claims be heard without prejudice. Yet it should not be supposed that calumnious attacks against the Church would cease with better inter-faith relations, for, while it is becoming increasingly bad form among religious people to attack the sincere beliefs of others, secularists apparently suffer from no such inhibitions, and most diatribes against the Church today stem from those whose purpose is really to discredit all religion. The extreme gullibility of sincere people is also to be blamed, and it is the willingness to accept and use false propaganda that makes it possible for the sowers of discord to create an atmosphere of doubt and confusion and to give religion a bad press.

Though the Catholic Church is the usual object of attack on the part of the irreligious, this is not always so, and what the secularists really intend is to put up the differences between Catholics and Protestants in the worst light, so that the unconvinced will say, "A plague on both your houses." We here give two examples of malicious propaganda through the press, one a

calumny against the Puritans, and the other a typical example of the secularist war against the Church. Admittedly, the Puritan is easy prey, for at best he is not exactly a lovable character, and he is the favorite game of those who seek to make religious faith seem odious. For generations a letter has been circulated in the press as an authentic copy of one sent by Cotton Mather, the high priest of Boston Puritanism, to a friend, John Higginson, on the subject of a boatload of Quakers on their way to the port of Boston.

The letter attributed to Mather reads thus: "There be at sea a ship (for our friend Elias Holcroft of London did advise me by the last packet it would be some time in August) called *Welcome*, which has aboard it a hundred or more heretics and malignants called Quakers, with William Penn, the scamp, at the head of them. The General Court has accordingly given secret orders to Master Malachi Hazett of the brig, Porpoise, to waylay said *Welcome* . . . and make captives of Penn and his ungodly crew, so that the Lord may be glorified and not mocked on the soil of this new country with the heathen worships of these people. Much spoil may be made by selling the whole lot to Bardadoes, where slaves fetch good prices in rumme and sugar and we shall not

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only do the Lord great service . . . but shall make good gain for his ministers and people."

This was signed, "Yours in the bonds of Christ," with Cotton Mather's name. As late as 1936 it was reprinted by the *English Congregational Quarterly* with scathing comment. Here is surely an example of how innocent people can be made dupes, for the Congregationalists would have no reason to publicize it unless convinced of its authenticity, since Mather is one of the leading figures of the Puritan or Congregational faith. Nevertheless the letter is a complete hoax. It was finally traced to James F. Shunk, who in the year 1870 was the anti-Puritan editor of a journal called the *Argus*, published in Easton, Pennsylvania, and the whole affair in recent years was exposed and given wide publicity by the *Reader's Digest*.

So far as we know, Catholic journals did not fall for this calumny, but we cite it as an example of false anti-Protestant propaganda so that Protestants themselves may think again before they believe every piece of anti-Catholic propaganda. Here, for example, is a letter printed in the "letters to the editor" column of *Time* magazine on November 18, 1946. It is signed by a gentleman named Michael P. Breen, who represents himself as a Catholic living in Reading, Pennsylvania. He writes in answer to an opinion expressed previously in the same magazine by the English Archbishop of York on the subject of the Catholic Church and mixed marriages. Says Breen:

"I saw the disgraceful remarks of the Anglican Archbishop of York. Must Protestant sects make it so difficult to win them to the one true Church of Christ on earth? There can be no free-

dom for error, and we are right and they are wrong. Why must they expect that they have any right to religious freedom?

"The answer to this problem of mixed marriages will come when we secure enough public control to make marriage by the Catholic Church the only one permitted by law."

Publication of this letter in *Time* was but the first episode in a series, for it has since been widely quoted as an example of Catholic intransigence. In a book published within recent months by Harper and Brothers, publisher, New York, it is again quoted. The author is J. Paul Williams, professor in the Department of Religion at Mount Holyoke College, and, while he himself is a Quaker, he makes a professedly objective study of "What Americans Believe and How They Worship." The epistle from *Time* appears under the chapter "The Roman Catholic Church." To be sure, the good professor indicates that it does not represent the weight of Catholic opinion; nevertheless, he cites it as the candid expression of one type of Catholic mentality.

He would have been more truthful and more scholarly had he stated that it was not the letter of a Catholic at all. Nor is there any excuse for his lapse, since within three weeks the letter of Michael P. Breen was exposed as a hoax in the same "letter column" of *Time* magazine.

*Time*, deserves little credit in the exposure, for the leg-work was done by an alert parish-priest, the Rev. Joseph G. Marten of St. Francis de Sales Church, Lenni Mills, Pennsylvania. Father Marten objected to the Breen letter and wrote as follows:

". . . at the time I considered the

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letter either a hoax, or more likely a deliberate attempt on the part of someone who is not himself a Catholic to discredit the Church. For me, as a priest, it was inconceivable that any Catholic would, under any provocation, express the sentiments contained in the final paragraph of this letter.

"In order to investigate for myself, I drove to Reading yesterday and spent a whole day trying to discover Michael P. Breen. This is the result:

- 1) No Michael P. Breen is to be found in the city directory.
- 2) The Breens who do live in Reading assure me that they know no one called 'Michael Breen.'
- 3) No parish priest has him on his parish list.
- 4) Officials at City Hall could not produce such a man.

"I am perfectly willing to bet you a life subscription to *Time* magazine against a contribution to any charity you may designate that there is no such Catholic."

*Time* answered with a footnote to Father Marten's letter. "No bet. *Time*, which checks all letters it regards as suspicious, fell for this one, found it was phony before it received Father Marten's thoroughgoing report."

The Breen letter, like the Cotton Mather Hoax, reveals the twisted mentality and unscrupulousness of those who seek to discredit religion. But more important, it discovers the ease with which powerful opinion-makers are duped and their willingness to use propaganda against the Church. Incongruously, the great boast of *Time* is its accuracy, and for this purpose it maintains a fabulous department of research. Yet the editor of *Time* confesses that, while "*Time* checks all letters it regards as suspicious," it found no reason to check the Breen epistle till it had been published, though Father Marten on reading the letter had concluded that "it was inconceivable that any Catholic could, under any provocation, express the sentiments contained in the final paragraph of the letter."

How effective was *Time's* correction printed at the foot of Father Marten's letter? Professor Williams and Harper Brothers give the answer, as they undertake a study of religions in a book meant to be used widely by American college students and cite the Breen letter as one type of Catholic mentality.

In the secular organs of opinion, religion generally gets a bad press today, but the reason would seem to be far simpler than is generally supposed. Much prejudice against the Catholic Church, at least, can be traced to a growing carelessness in the press with respect to truth, especially that truth which concerns the values of the eternal revealed religion. One is reminded of St. Augustine's axiom: "The truth sometimes asks only a hearing in order to be embraced." Today this might be amended slightly for the benefit of the Church and the press to read: "The truth asks only a hearing."

### Trouble Guaranteed

When we start something new and anybody comes to me and says, "Don't you think you are going to have a lot of trouble?" I say: "Sure, any time you start to do anything new, we will guarantee the trouble." Success depends on whether you get through the trouble or not. *Chas. Kettering*

# Teen-Age Problems

*Donald F. Miller*

## Steady Dating at Thirteen

*Problem:* I am only thirteen years old and the problem of dating has already confronted me. I am in the eighth grade and among my friends there is much talk about this, because some of them are already meeting boys downtown to go to movies with them, and others say that they intend to start dating in the first year of high school. My parents have told me that dating this early is out of the question, and of course, my school-mates strongly disagree with their decision. What is your opinion?

*Solution:* I shall not give you merely an opinion, but I shall tell you what is the law of God in this matter. It is the law of God, evident to human reason, that steady dating may be taken up only when one is in a position to look forward to marriage within a reasonable time. Now certainly, as an eighth grader, or a ninth grader, or even as a tenth grader, you are not in a position to think of marrying within a reasonable time, which would be within a year or, at the most, two years. Therefore it is not only inadvisable but even seriously wrong to have a "steady," i.e., a boy with whom you go out a few times a week alone, as early as in the eighth or ninth or tenth grade.

What is the reason behind this natural law? The principal reason is the fact that steady dating is inevitably bound to become an occasion of sin, and occasions may be entered, with due precautions taken to avoid sin, only when there is a serious reason for so doing. Such a serious occasion would be the possibility of marriage within a reasonable time. If young people go steady without any thought of marriage or without the prudent possibility of getting married within a reasonable time, they find themselves more and more violently tempted, and as time goes on, to take part in passionate kissing and embracing and other seriously sinful actions. It is a most rare exception for early teen-agers to go steady for a number of years without any reasonable prospect of marriage not to fall into mortal sins, and into mortal sins that become a habit. The occasion of such sins must be avoided, and the occasion is steady company-keeping years before you can think of getting married.

Be sure to answer your companions, therefore, when they argue for steady dating in the eighth grade or the first years of high school. There is no such thing as steady dating just for the purpose of "having a good time." The good time will almost inevitably lead into habitual sin. Be brave enough to stand against all the arguments of a pagan world in this matter and wait until you can begin to look forward to marriage reasonably and prudently before you enter into any steady dating.

# Against Sinful Birth-Control

Here we let a few mothers, who have not succumbed to the strong temptation to use birth-prevention as a means of escape from burdens, tell their story to those who have.

In the March issue of THE LIGUORIAN, we published a letter from a 29-year-old mother of four children in which she stated how tired and worn-out she was, and threatened to leave the Catholic Church or to give up the sacraments unless the latter discontinued teaching that contraception is always a mortal sin. We answered this young mother's letter in THE LIGUORIAN, as the Church will answer all such appeals to the end of time, by trying to show why the Church does not have the power to change the natural law of God, and cannot declare the immoral act of contraception lawful under any circumstances.

This published exchange of letters brought in a vast number of letters from readers, within a week of the delivery of the March LIGUORIAN. One of them, and that one unsigned, agreed with the young mother who demanded that the Church change her stand on contraception, and informed us that she too would give up receiving the sacraments unless a change were made. All the others received thus far were ardent appeals to the complaining young mother not to give up her faith, nor to abandon the grace of God by living a life of sin. Most of

them were written by mothers who went through the same trying times and the same temptations as the writer of the original letter.

These letters are the most eloquent tribute to the power of the grace of God, and the ability of Catholics to live up to their faith in a secularistic world, that we have ever read. They are far better answers to the young 29-year-old mother who is in danger of leaving the Church and losing her soul for the sake of contraception than we wrote. That is why we publish the following sampling of these letters here. The originals have been sent to the young mother who inspired their writing.

Dear Father:

After reading the letter from N.N. (For and Against Birth-Control), I have an irresistible urge to answer it. You see, I too am a young mother of twenty-nine, height 5' 3", weight 107 pounds, but with one big difference — I have eight children. She, N.N., married a convert — in my case, I am the convert. My wonderful husband and I have been married eight years and have one child for each and every year, plus one I lost through a mis-

carriage. I know what she is going through for I too have had the same doubts, bitterness and feeling of utter hopelessness. To begin with, I have R H negative blood that always keeps us guessing about the outcome of every pregnancy, chronic bronchitis that keeps me tied up every winter with colds, and as last winter, pneumonia, which I had three separate times, thus putting quite a drain on my husband's patience, nerves and pocketbook.

We have a warm comfortable house that at the present time is bulging at the seams and if we have one more baby we will have to start hanging them by their coattails to sleep. We have plenty of food on our table to keep us reasonably healthy and well fed, for which we're thankful and we have clothing to keep us warm. We have no money but over and above all we have *love*. All this may be beside the point and maybe it is the whole point, for in the past year I have found that love is the very simple answer to all women who find themselves in the position of having a baby every year and can't seem to stop.

My doctors have in the past urged me to use contraceptives. My husband even urged me too and, of course, all those well-meaning friends and neighbors, some of them also Catholics. Sometimes it even seems as though one can be almost a social outcast because they have a large family and happen to be proud of it. And proud of it we are!

For a long while, or it seemed a long while to me, I wavered. I wasn't sure. I had all the faults and frustrations that one could imagine possible. I knew the Church would never change her stand so I decided it would be me and my husband — simple, isn't it? There happened to be a mission about

this time and I made it. My husband did also. I prayed and I prayed and when I got tired I prayed some more. Gradually I took a good look at myself and at my soul. I came to the conclusion that to want no more children was selfish — just plain, pure selfishness. Here I was, capable of having beautiful, healthy children for love of God, love of my husband and I wasn't going to let anyone or anything talk me out of it. Everyday, whenever I felt the need, I got in the habit of talking to Our Lord and Our Mother as if they were with me. We have had lots of interesting conversations and they are always willing to listen while I scrub the floor or cook our dinner or hang out the wash. In this way I feel especially close to God. I have come to know Him much better and besides, I can spend more time with Him that way. A busy mother who puts in close to fourteen hours a day doesn't have too much time to pray on her knees. Every night though, all of us say the rosary together, sometimes even the baby who is four months old.

You see, I found out after probing my mind that the reason I worked so hard all day keeping the house clean, the children clean, everybody well fed and reasonably happy was because I loved God, I loved my husband and I loved my family. Then, the most amazing thing happened — I found that I didn't get so tired anymore, I didn't get angry at my husband anymore (at least not as much) and still more amazing, I found that we had a deeper understanding of one another than we had ever had. There was a new tenderness and awareness of each other as individuals and if possible, a new love. It was almost as though we had just met and married. When we found that we were to have another baby we were glad — it was

almost as if we were having our first child. We looked forward to his coming almost with wonder, and now that he's here we enjoy him so much and the other children simply idolize him. If in the next month or so I find that we are to be blessed again I shall be very flattered that God has so much confidence in our small abilities as parents and has given us such a joyous way of showing our obedience to Him and to His Church.

As I have said, it isn't easy but if one just faces up to it and admits that it is hard, but they will do their duty anyway, the battle is half won. From there on in, it's smooth sailing. I might also say that the best way to forget oneself is to help others — I make a habit of trying to help my neighbors with baby-sitting or anything they may need help with. After all, when you have four or eight, one or two more children won't make a bit of difference.

Well, I could go on all night but I thank you for bearing with me and I still have the rest of your magazine to read and the baby to feed. I just hope and pray that N.N. wakes up, as I did, to all the joy and happiness that are in store for her if she will just give it a chance.

H.C.S.  
Alexandria, Va.

Dear Father:

I have just finished reading "For and Against Birth-Control." How I pitied that poor young mother. You see, I've been there. If only I could sit and talk with her for a couple of hours I'm sure I could make her see how wrong she is in thinking that birth-control is the solution for her.

When I had my third baby in three years I felt exactly the way she does. I was sure that the Church did not

know what it was talking about. I felt that marriage was a trap, that nature had tricked young couples into an impossible situation. I was sure that marital abstinence was not possible for us who loved each other so well. Around me were people who used birth-control and seemed to be doing a much better job of raising their small families than we were and who seemed to have more financially than we had. People had made remarks about the children being so close and insinuated (or maybe it was my imagination) that we were over-sexed or morons.

No one can know just how exhausting small children can be or how the fear of another pregnancy can grow out of all proportion except someone who has been through it. To come home from the hospital four days after giving birth and taking on the care of a family is awful. I often felt that I couldn't lift my arms, never mind lifting children 60 or 70 times a day. I got to the point where I could neither pray nor think straight. I walked around the house telling off imaginary priests, etc. I continued to go to Mass but I paid no attention, I just sat there as if enclosed in a big bubble of self-pity. I tried to convince my good husband that we should use birth-control. Lucky for me, he would have none of it! He said that no matter how difficult it would be, he would prefer total abstinence to living in mortal sin. I really have him to thank for the way things have worked out.

I finally saw that he was right and began to pray again. I decided that I would leave it up to God. I asked Mary to help me. I prayed that rhythm would work for us. It did. I had my fourth baby when the third was three years old. This was ideal spacing and I hope that I can space the next one as well. I have decided that having

children may be the only route God will give me to heaven. If so, I am glad to take it.

If this girl's husband would help her instead of tempting her, they would both be better off. That goes for her mother-in-law too! If they both give her a hand with her house-work and caring for the children she will regain her strength quickly. Tell her not to condemn the rhythm system without giving it a fair trial. It does work if you stick to it.

I intend to pray for her every day in hope that she will solve this problem and have the peace and contentment that I now feel. A guilty conscience added to her present nervous exhaustion could be disastrous.

A Reader  
New York

Dear Father Miller:

This is in the nature of a reply to the article written by the young mother concerning birth-control.

I too was a convert some nineteen years ago. My husband was Catholic and I just couldn't see raising children one way and believing something different myself. I decided to really try to become a Catholic and I prayed very hard. I was very fortunate because God was very good to me and I became a convert — the first Catholic ever on my family's side — for you see I came from a Southern family who were all either Methodist or Baptist. I tell you this because you can see after I finish my story what wonderful graces God does give for obedience to His laws — not one but all — not the ones we don't mind but the ones that cause us hardship and sufferings.

I was filled with a great zeal after I was converted to be a good Catholic, but right at the beginning I found

that it wasn't going to be easy. My own relatives on my husband's side cautioned me about trying to live my marriage as the Church advocated. They thought it was foolish, but I, still in the throes of my fervor, decided right then and there, with God's grace, that I would be one hundred per cent Catholic, not eighty, sixty, but one hundred per cent, as far as I was humanly able.

Well, the first baby came. I almost lost my life and the baby almost died. It was bad, real bad, and I suffered. My health was bad for two years, then I became pregnant again. I'll admit I was scared, scared stiff but I prayed and God as usual heard my prayer. I had a beautiful boy, *easily*. In the course of time I had two more youngsters. My health was poor throughout this period, including a complete nervous collapse. I tell you this to show it's never been too easy, but I also tell you it's been the most worthwhile, soul-satisfying experience that could happen to a human being, for you see God has truly blessed me and my family for those years of struggling poverty, ill health, contention in the family, etc., for just listen to the things that have come to us.

First of all, my daughter is a postulant for the Immaculate Heart of Mary at St. Mary's Convent, Monroe, Mich. No words can describe that pride and sheer joy of seeing one chosen from your own to do God's work — it's terrific!

Secondly, I am called to the Third Order of St. Francis, where both my husband and I will be professed a few days before my daughter receives her veil on May 31.

Third, I am a slave to Mary, having made the total consecration to Our Blessed Mother.

Fourth, lest these spiritual things

fail to impress you, we now have a thriving Electrical Contracting business, which gives us a good living and enough over to help worthy charities and foreign mission work.

By the way, my boy who is sixteen years old is aspiring to the priesthood. With prayer and hope that he will some day succeed "my cup runneth over with happiness." Was it worthwhile? What do you think?

I do hope that you may be able to send this letter to N.N. that it might influence her somewhat. It's so worthwhile that when you're forty-two you wish you had ten children to offer for God's work, not four.

Mrs. T.J.K.

Dear Father:

I just received the March LIGUORIAN, and one of the first things I read was "For and Against Birth-Control." Frankly, I'm not quite so sympathetic as you are, Father, with the complaining young mother. I really don't think that she is trying very hard to resist the "suggestions" of her would-be friends and other questionable Catholic mothers whom she knows.

She displays a lamentable lack of knowledge of her faith by classifying the Church's stand on birth-control and divorce with such changeable things as fasting and evening Mass. I assume from her letter that she was born in the Catholic faith. I was not so fortunate. I am a convert of about four and a half years and I will agree that at first many things were difficult for me and I too did my share of questioning, both orally and mentally. But through discussions with priests, reading and prayer, I came to understand and to fully accept the teaching of the Church.

My husband is confronted at his place of business with the same ques-

tions from non-Catholics as well as Catholics. For example, why, if the Church changes one thing, can't it change another? And the same old dodge, "I don't think God meant it that way." I heard all these arguments as a Protestant, and to me it now seems like whistling in the dark. I wonder if N.N. has ever really discussed her problem with an understanding priest face to face. Or has she only talked about it to the people who are evidently giving her the answers she wants?

Women such as these make me impatient, God forgive me. Certainly she has her cross to bear, but so have millions of others. The cross of being unable to have children at all can be a much greater burden. (I know; I have lost two within a year and a half.) Doesn't she realize the precious gift that God has given her? I wonder if she has passed her complaining attitude on to her children. Do they feel loved and wanted, or do they feel just the opposite. Children do sense such things. Will they grow up to the same sort of half-baked Catholics as their mother (and father too) apparently is, the type who with his non-Catholic neighbors interprets the Bible to suit his own devices? We've all seen them, and the sad fact of it is that they will listen to anyone, their modern friends, their atheistic doctors, the interfering relatives who feel that "really my dear, it just doesn't seem quite decent to have so many children (any more than two, that is)" — but not to the Church. Why don't she and her husband discuss their problem with a priest, and not with so many other people? Why don't they pray for the strength to practice a little restraint? Why don't they really try to use the rhythm system (they seem only to have decided that it won't work)? Perhaps

this woman's lot is made more difficult by a husband who is not understanding and lacks moral stamina; it so, I feel sorry for her.

Never before have I written a letter like this, Father, but I just had to explode because one hears so much of this type of thing. I have so many friends, apart from my husband and

myself, who would dearly love to have the problem of too many children, rather than the problem of none. I'll trade her problems any day, but I'll keep the type of person I'm blessed with for a husband, thank you. If you want to pass this letter on to N.N., you are welcome to do so.

Mrs. P. M.

## Pre-Marriage Clinic

*Donald F. Miller*

### How to Resist "Petting"

**Problem:** I know that quite a few of my girl friends have the same trouble that I have. It is the old problem of petting. It seems that you can't go out on a date these days without having to fight for your purity. I like one fellow very much. He is a Catholic, but he states that he won't take girls out who refuse to take part in petting. I've tried to make him see how wrong he is, but I've got nowhere. In every other respect he is a wonderful fellow, kind and generous and faithful to his Church. Can you help me so that I can help him?

**Solution:** Sometimes when you find that a man lays it down as a principle that he won't date without petting, there is only one way out of the difficulty and that is to give up the man. This may be hard, if you are strongly attached to the individual, but remember that Our Lord said: "If your right eye leads you into sin, pluck it out and throw it away." He meant to signify that even the dearest things in our lives must be given up if they lead us into sin.

There is something frightening about a man who calls himself a Catholic and at the same time tells a girl-friend that he will not take her out unless she consents to petting. Since petting, in the usual acceptance of the word, is always a mortal sin, this means that the man is living in a constant state of mortal sin. He has no repentance for past sins of impurity, and no intention of giving up such sins in the future. He cannot make a good confession in that state, and if he ever receives Holy Communion, he receives it sacrilegiously. No matter how kind he is, he is a poor bet for marriage, because it's practically inevitable that he will, not too long after marriage, be unfaithful to his wife at least by petting with somebody else and probably by complete adultery. Any man who before marriage says that he won't take out any girl who refuses to pet will not have the will power or the courage or the grace to be faithful to his wife.

In all this you may find something to say to your sex-crazed boy-friend that will help him see what a hypocritical Catholic and disloyal follower of Christ he really is. But if you do not make a dent in his obstinate desire to use your body to help him commit his sins, then give him up. Leave him to the abandoned girls who have themselves sold out Christ to pamper their bodies.

# Signs and Symbols in Church

An explanation of some of the common signs and symbols used in church art and decoration.

*Louis G. Miller*

**M**OST people are probably mystified by much that they see in church.

We don't mean the religious functions at the altar, which are followed readily by means of a missal.

What we have in mind are the pictures and symbols and signs painted around the walls and above the altars. In all Catholic churches you will find such representations. You will see strange letters from some foreign alphabet, or geometric figures such as the triangle. Strange animals and birds also find their way into the decoration, such as the unicorn and the pelican.

You know the meaning of some of these symbols, of course. The lamb, for example, quite obviously stands for Jesus, the Lamb of God. But others may have continued to puzzle you. This article will serve as an attempt to explain why we make use of these symbols in our churches, and to list some of the more common ones, with their meanings. To such a study liturgists give the name of iconography, from the Greek word, *icon*, meaning picture or image.

It is traditional in many of the Protestant churches to reprobate the use of these symbols and images, and to accuse Catholics of idolatry from the mere fact of having them in their houses of worship. We do not intend here to enter into controversy on this point. We simply and flatly deny the

allegation of idolatry. For us these symbols and images represent the flowing over into the material sphere of our inward service and worship of God. They are a reminder kept constantly before our eyes of Christ and all He stands for, and of His mother and His closest friends, the saints. We feel that it cannot but increase our religious spirit if outwardly we fix our vision upon that which is designed to lift our thoughts to higher things.

From earliest Christian times the Church has willingly given bent to the natural human instinct in these matters. Many of our signs and symbols (such as, for example, the fish representing Christ) can be found on the walls of the Roman catacombs, imprinted there within the century after our Lord's death. The early basilicas and the great Gothic cathedrals are filled with such imagery. In the middle ages, when the great majority of the people were uneducated, these great churches, with their wealth of illustration and symbolism, served as one of the chief means of instructing them in the truths of the faith.

But if the Church has encouraged the use of icons, she has also insisted on exercising supervisory control over their development and use. The need for such supervision should be quite apparent. Man's imagination, if left unchecked, can express itself in weird excesses and distortions, which would

be entirely out of place in the temple of God.

This supervisory policy of the Church has been formulated in our own times in two special canons (1279 and 1280) in the official code of canon law. According to these provisions, only such pictures and images are to be permitted in church which are in keeping with the approved usage of the Church. Excluded, obviously, are pictures based on false dogma or opposed to decency or honesty, or such as might offer an occasion of error to the uninstructed.

It is, for example, the approved usage of the Church to represent God the Holy Spirit as a dove or as a flame of fire, and she wishes only these traditional manifestations to be used. The Holy Trinity is never to be represented as three men, much less as a three-headed man. We take this fact for granted, never having seen such images in our churches, but their absence is testimony of the wise supervision of the Church down through the centuries.

One small and seeming exception to the rule might be mentioned at this point. Everywhere in medieval churches, and occasionally in modern churches, you will find ugly, grinning little figures called "gargoyles." Peeping around pillars, in corners, on waterspouts, and carved in miniature on choir-stalls can be seen these little imps which are in such great contrast to the beauty and stateliness of the edifice and its appointments. Usually they will have the form of dragons, monkeys, serpents, griffins or other beasts regarded with distaste. They were originally introduced as silent sermons on the folly of sin. Often they are represented as crushed or half-hidden, to show submission, or they may appear on some high parapet

or cornice as if driven out of the church by the holiness they found there.

A favorite of the wood-carvers of a former age was the imp Titynillus, who was supposed to specialize in distracting monks who were at their prayers in choir. A miniature of this ugly little imp may often be found among the elaborate carvings on choir stalls.

The use of the gargoyles was permitted by the Church because they served a salutary purpose. Their very ugliness served by contrast to point up the beauty around them. They were the material representation of evil, and by that very fact, they served to turn people's thoughts to what was good. Obviously, however, this one example of ugliness could not be used as a basis for the further and more open display of evil.

We come now to a summary of the more common figures, emblems and images used in the decoration of churches.

The central mystery of our faith is, of course, the Holy Trinity, by which we believe that there are three equal Persons in one God. The ways of representing this mystery are necessarily somewhat restricted. It is probable, however, that if the reader of these lines, wherever he happens to be, will examine carefully the painting on the sanctuary walls of his parish church, he will find one of the following symbols of the Trinity:

An equilateral triangle (three sides of equal length),  
a triangle intersecting a circle,  
three intersecting circles,  
a three-leaved clover, or shamrock, which traditionally was St. Patrick's favorite.

It may be that within the triangle

### The *Liguorian*

will be a couple of strange looking symbols; they will doubtless be Hebrew letters standing for Jehovah.

Sometimes an eye in a triangle will be painted high overhead in the sanctuary, representing the all-seeing eye of God.

As representing God the Father, the first Person of the Blessed Trinity, the following symbols may be found: a hand lifted in blessing, or an imperial crown, representing God's rulership, or the head or half-figure of an aged man, sometimes holding a book, or a globe with a cross.

God the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, appears in sacred art almost exclusively as a dove, since it was in this form that He Himself chose to appear on the occasion of Christ's baptism by St. John. "And immediately on coming up from the water he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, as a dove, descending and remaining upon Him." (St. Mark) One other representation and only one other is permitted, and that is the fiery tongues under which form the Holy Spirit chose to come down upon the apostles on the feast of Pentecost.

In regard to God the Son, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Who became man and redeemed the human race by His death on the cross, there has grown up over the centuries a veritable wealth of imagery.

A word first about the symbols used for the name of our Saviour. They have their origin mainly in the Greek language, in which the New Testament originally was written. The name of our Redeemer in Greek in a somewhat crude English transliteration is IHSOUS XPISTOS. The Greek language has no letter J, and I is used instead. Similarly, the H is the Greek

equivalent for our letter E, X stands for our C, and P is the Greek equivalent for our letter R. Often on the altar can be seen the monogram: IHS. This does not stand for "I have suffered," as some have deduced. It is an abbreviated form of the name of Jesus in Greek. Thus also with the so-called Chi Rho monogram: these are the first two letters of the Greek word XPISTOS. (Remember that XP in Greek stands for CR in English.) This monogram may appear as Xp, or with the p superimposed in some way on the X, or both letters superimposed on a cross.

Another monogram often seen on altars is the alpha-omega symbol, A-W. Alpha (A) and omega (W) are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. In the Apocalypse, St. John reports these words of Christ: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and last, the beginning and the end."

Occasionally also in church decoration you will see the word NIKA, meaning victory, and with it perhaps a palm, standing for immortality, and both applicable to Christ's triumph over death and sin for our sake.

The actual pictures or representations of Christ in sacred art are many and varied. He is seen as the good shepherd, with His flock around Him, or carrying a sheep on His shoulder; Christ Himself loved to use this figure to describe His love for men. Again He may be portrayed as a priest, or as a king, or perhaps as He will appear to men on the awe-inspiring day of final judgment. In the celebrated statue known as the Infant Jesus of Prague He is represented as a King, with crown on His head and holding a globe surmounted by a cross. But here the idea is that He wins the allegiance of the world by humbling

Himself to come before it as a tender child. There is indeed much variety in there representations of Christ, and the Church asks only that artists stay within the broad limits of traditional usage, while preserving decency and honesty in their method of portrayal.

This remains true also of the scene of our Lord's crucifixion, much loved by Christian artists down through the centuries. In various ways they have tried to capture the drama and pathos of that tableau, so infinitely important for the world's welfare. Certain features recur repeatedly in these pictures, and have acquired a special traditional value.

The inscription on the cross over our Saviour's head, for instance, is always INRI. The gospels record that Pilate ordered it to be inscribed on the cross in several languages that Jesus of Nazareth was king of the Jews. The Latin inscription was JESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM. The Latin has no J in its alphabet, and the Latin word for king is *rex*. The first letter of each of these four words gives us our inscription: INRI.

In the crucifixion scene, of course, are usually represented Mary Magdalene and St. John, together with such other participants as the artist may wish to summon up for us. Some of the older artists were fond of picturing angels, gathering the precious Blood of Christ as it poured from our Lord's wounds.

There are several other objects which may often be seen in portrayals of the crucifixion. A skull at the foot of the cross points up the fact that Calvary was also known as Golgotha, the "hill of the skull," and also that our Lord by His physical death overcame the spiritual death of sin. Somewhat of the same significance attaches

to the serpent which may sometimes be seen coiled around the foot of the cross.

Pictures of our Lord under the title of the Sacred Heart are of fairly recent origin, dating back to the seventeenth century. The heart has always been the symbol of love, and in these pictures Christ appears (just as He appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque) with His heart visible, wounded, and on fire to symbolize His love for us. A parallel devotion to the immaculate heart of Mary has also sprung up, and the Church has placed her approval on both these beautiful devotions.

So far we have dealt with actual *pictures* of Christ. Now we should make mention of a whole series of *symbols* which are used to call His presence to mind in sacred art.

One of the very early symbols representing Christ was the fish, and it may still be seen in many a church among the decorative designs. Its origin is of some interest; in the early centuries of persecution, no one dared to mention the word "Christian" in public, and the image of a fish was used as a secret sign of fellowship. The word for fish in Greek is IXTHUS, and each of the letters of this word is the first letter in Greek of one of the titles of Christ.

I	— IHSOUS —	Jesus
X	— XPISTOS —	Christ
TH	— THEOS —	God
U	— UIOUS —	Son
S	— SOTER —	Redeemer

A lamb is very often used to symbolize Christ, who was the lamb of God, sacrificed for the sins of the world. This symbol will frequently be found on the frontal piece of an altar, and often the lamb will be lying upon a book with seven seals (from the Apocalypse), with a banner of

victory, showing that He has won the world and rules the world.

Another rather common symbol of Christ is the pelican, usually portrayed as standing over several of its young ones and stabbing its own breast with its beak to nourish them with its blood. According to the legend, the pelican is capable of this self-sacrifice. If the legend is untrue, at least it remains a very happy symbol of the heroic self-sacrifice of Christ for the souls of men.

Other symbols for Christ in ordinary use by church decorators are: The brazen serpent which Moses at God's command used to heal his people; the unicorn, which, according to legend, could be captured and tamed only by a virgin; the mythical phenix, a bird which was said to live for 500 years, then was burnt to ashes, and from its ashes, was restored to life. What better symbol to portray our Lord's resurrection from the dead?

An ancient and popular symbol of Christ's redemptive power is the seven-fold fountain springing from the foot of the cross, with a thirsty hart drinking from the waters. This of course stands for the seven sacraments, while the hart is the soul which thirsts for the grace of God.

On or near the altar frequently will be found little paintings or carvings of grapes or a vine, or a shock of wheat. These obviously stand for the Holy Eucharist, since from wheat and grapes the elements of the sacrifice are obtained. The host itself, or the chalice may also be found pictured near the altar. The chalice especially, as the "holy grail," has been a very common symbol since the days when the real chalice used by Christ was the object of many a knight's lifelong search.

We turn now to the images and

emblems of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Of these also a great many have sprung up over the centuries from the loving imagination and devotion of the faithful.

Usually (but not always) in pictures of Mary she holds in her arms her divine child. Often she is given a crown of 12 stars, with the sun and moon beneath her feet. Sometimes a sceptre denoting her queenship is placed in her hand, and not infrequently she is portrayed with the serpent under her foot, since she is the fulfillment of the prophecy in Genesis that one would come who would "crush the serpent's head." Some pictures of Mary portray her joy, and others her sorrows, and these latter are called "passion pictures." Among the very ancient portrayals of our Lady is that known as our Mother of Perpetual Help. In it Mary is pictured as comforting her frightened child, while angels present to His view the instruments of His passion.

Raphael painted 30 Madonnas, and Murillo 26, and neither was satisfied after all these efforts. Perhaps because it is impossible to capture her full beauty on canvas, sacred artists are content often to represent her by sign and symbol. Mary has many symbols. She is described as a lily, as a rose, and as a star (the star of the sea and the morning star.) She is the ark of the covenant and the tower of ivory and the gate of heaven, and in using these and many other symbols, artists express their conviction that she plays a very important role in the unfolding of our redemption.

We have last of all to sketch the symbolism that may be found in representations of the saints in sacred art. In such a wide field, we can do no more than indicate a few salient

points.

The symbols very commonly used for the four evangelists should be mentioned; they are found sometimes painted at the four extremities of the cross, or on the wall above or near the altar. The very early use of these symbols may be said to stem from a reference in the book of the Apocalypse, chapter four. St. John describes there in a very mystical fashion the throne of God in heaven, and in his description can be found this sentence: ". . . Round the throne are four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind. And the first living creature is like a lion, and the second like a calf, and third had a face, as it were, of a man, and the fourth is like an eagle flying."

The early fathers of the Church saw in this a reference to the authors of the gospels, and applied the verse in the following way, which sacred artists have since adhered to:

St. Matthew: a man shown in bust, holding a book and pen; perhaps he is seen as a man because he begins his gospel with the account of genealogy of Jesus from David and his human ancestors.

St. Mark: a lion, probably because he begins his gospel with an account of Jesus in the desert among wild beasts.

St. Luke: an ox, because his account opens with Zachary offering up sacrifice in the temple.

St. John: an eagle, denoting the soaring sublimity of his gospel, which is concerned primarily with Christ's divinity.

In statues or pictures, the saints will often be made to carry some symbolic article in their hands, as for instance the large key usually seen in St. Peter's hand, signifying the keys of the kingdom of heaven given to him by Christ.

St. Joseph usually holds a flowering rod, by which, according to tradition, the high priest knew him to be God's choice as spouse of Mary.

It is customary to portray some saints with the instruments of their profession or trade; thus bishop saints usually have a mitre and crozier, and St. Isidore, the farmer, is portrayed with a shovel. Others again are presented with the instrument of their martyrdom, as for instance St. Paul, with the sword which took off his head, or St. Catherine of Alexandria, with the wheel on which she was racked and torn. Occasionally the object carried is entirely symbolic, as in the case of the little modern saint, Maria Goretti, who is depicted with an armful of lilies, the sign of purity, since it was in defense of her purity that she died. And of course roses are forever associated with St. Therese, the Little Flower, who kept her promise of letting fall a shower of roses from heaven after her death.

Thus we come to the end of our explorations into the science and art of iconography. Our hope is that interest will be stirred up in the hearts of some who read these lines to study with greater awareness the symbols, emblems and pictures on the walls of their parish church, or of any church they may visit. By a deeper understanding of these treasures of Christian art, they may find it somewhat easier to lift up their minds and hearts to God in prayer.

For that, after all, is the essential purpose of all sacred art: to serve as the handmaid of devotion and prayer. As with church music, wisely chosen and well-performed, so with sacred art, their important task is to conduct us with reverence into the solemn presence of God.



# readers retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

Moline, Ill.

"I think you checked very poorly with the Y.M.C.A. as it is today. My son is nearly ten years old and has been a member for three years. At no time during this whole period has religion of any sort been brought to his attention. There have been no papers to sign declaring the equality of all religions, no pledges to be made. We feel that your statement that Catholics should not have any membership in the Y.M.C.A. is most misleading because you did not check into the matter as thoroughly as you should have. If you had checked on places where they have a separate boys' department, you would have found that the boys can learn swimming, handicrafts, gym exercises, etc., all for a membership fee of \$6.00 a year. Surely this cuts down on delinquency without the subject of religion ever being brought up. As a service to the Mothers' Club in connection with the Y, to which I belong, I type file cards for the boys' department and help out in other ways. I see no harm to my religion or my son's because of this association or membership. As a matter of fact I think that a Catholic can help his religion by helping others and being a good example, don't you? I hope this letter sheds a little light on the subject of the Y.M.C.A. for you.

Mrs. C. B. D."

*We have never been unaware that it is possible for a Catholic to have a paid membership in the Y, and to take part in many of its athletic activities, without once being asked to sign a statement of belief contrary to his conscience, and even without*

*being subjected to any direct religious propaganda. When the Holy See forbade membership in the Y.M.C.A. in the decree of Nov. 5, 1930, it did so on the ground that "such membership may lead to rationalism and indifferentism in religion." This danger seems to us especially great when children under ten are introduced into the Y, and gradually made more and more dependent upon it for their leisure time activities. As they grow up they will be increasingly inclined to accept not only the facilities offered them, but also the religious principle to serve which the facilities are offered.*

The Editors

Springfield, Mo.

"Please cancel my subscription to your bigoted, malevolent, un-Christian magazine. I won't allow another copy to enter my home. The article on Catholics and the Y.M.C.A. is so bigoted that my son-in-law remarked that he had no idea that Catholics were so bigoted and narrow-minded. He is not a Catholic, but drives his wife and little ones to Mass every Sunday, and he respects our religion and I respect his. Therefore I don't want him to hear any more about the kind of religion you preach. One of the leading Catholic society leaders in this city was on the board of the Y.W.C.A. for years, and my daughter's best friend, also a Catholic, worked in the office for the Y. My daughters all took lessons in swimming, tennis, etc., at the Y. I know they never heard such bigoted talk as you had in THE LIGUORIAN.

Mrs. J.J.M."

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*We realize how very difficult it is for those who are not clear in their own minds about the responsibilities connected with the possession of religious truth, to be patient with those who have verified religious convictions and a sense of obligation not to act contrary to them. Being called a bigot, we suppose, is part of the price to be paid for devotion to truth, in a world that has largely given up the quest of religious truth as unattainable.*

The Editors

Bloomington, Ill.

"Your article on the Y.M.C.A. was deeply appreciated. I had almost unthinkingly taken out a membership a few years ago, and then, after some thinking, never renewed it. Recently I started to worry about whether it was right for my children to make regular use of the Y facilities. Now my mind is completely at rest on this problem, since I have read your article.

Mrs. R.W."

*No argument here, thank God, but calm acceptance of the inescapable principle that the possession of religious truth makes us bound not to give our support to what we have found to be untruth. The untruth here involved is the assumption of the Y.M.C.A. that all religions are equally good.*

The Editors

Pittsburgh, Pa.

"I have read with interest your fine article on the Y.M.C.A. It gave a good synopsis of the background and purposes of the Y. However it has also confused me somewhat and caused a bit of upset with a few of my friends. We agree on the religious aspirations of the Y, and that it does incorporate religious training on a super-denominational level. Now, after almost fourteen years of being a member, I am being made aware for the first time of the factor of thereby supporting another faith than my own, and that is disturbing to my conscience. I believe statistics show that there

is a heavy percentage of Catholics enrolled in the Y here in my own city, and many of them do quite a bit of work on membership drives. I have never seen any conflict between Catholics and Protestants in all the years I have been a member. Your article states that it appears to be lawful to use athletic facilities on a 'pay-as-you-use' plan. But this is not within the financial reach of hard-working Catholics who have been accustomed for years to make use of athletic facilities such as are offered by the Y. It would nearly triple the cost of straight membership. If the Y offers the only opportunity for needed exercise and activities, could that fact justify a Catholic in paying for a membership and utilizing only the athletic and recreational facilities it has to offer?

Anon."

*We draw the line at approving membership in the Y for Catholics, unless in some local and individual circumstances a man's pastor or bishop would make the decision that it could be permitted for grave and weighty reasons. Becoming a member means affiliating oneself with an organization that stands before the world as representing a religious principle that an intelligent Catholic is convinced is wrong, viz., that Protestantism in general, and indifferentism toward the hundreds of different Protestant sects, represent true Christianity. It makes no difference that little actual proselytizing is done in the Y; the point is that it is a service organization founded by Protestants to promote the Protestant principle of religion.*

The editors

Anon

"I have just finished reading your article on the Y.M.C.A. and I was never so shocked in my life as when I read that a Catholic should not help to build a youth center for the Y. Have you forgotten that it was a Jew who helped Father Flanagan to build Boys town? When Jesus called the little chil-

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dren to Him, I'm sure He didn't ask them if they were all Catholics. Another thing: When we were building our new church here, Protestants worked side by side with Catholics to get the job done. Do Catholics think that everyone should help them, while they are not allowed to help others? I can't see the fairness of that.

N.N."

*There is a vast difference between fairness, charity, cooperation with others in relieving suffering, and contributing directly to a religious venture that one knows to be erroneous. Most Protestants believe that all religions are equally good, and that therefore they do nothing wrong in contributing to any of them, including the Catholic. But any Protestant who is convinced that his is the only true religion would be bound in conscience (just like any Catholic) not to contribute to a religious organization dedicated to spreading teachings that he believed to be false.*

The editors

Highland Park, Mich.

"Recently when I mentioned to a friend (he is a Roman Catholic who eats roast beef on Friday) that the Pope and his hierarchy opposed the Y.M.C.A., he merely commented, 'that old fossil.' Amusing, is it not, this opposition by your old fossil hierarchy to an institution whose growth just cannot be stopped. How much longer do you expect to remain in the rut? The record of the R.C. corporation stinks.

L.A.P."

*The roast-beef-eating "Catholic" will have much more to account for before God than the deluded writer of this note, who has probably moved only in circles where the Catholic Church is slandered and derided.*

The editors

Baltimore, Md.

"May I be permitted a few words on your article 'Catholics and the Y.M.C.A.'? Being a Quaker, I am in about as much

ill-repute with Catholicism as with Protestantism, and having had a little experience with the Y, I feel that I can see both sides of the question that has been raised. Some years ago, while living in Pennsylvania, I was asked to act as a field-secretary of the Philadelphia unit of the Y. Not knowing too much about the organization, I accepted and was able to send them a number of young men of good character who were leaving the country for the 'big city.' In a short time I found that only those of a certain standing, financial and social, were accepted. I resigned at once and have had nothing to do with the Y since. I have been told since by many that it is little more than a rich young man's pleasure club.

C.M."

*We are convinced that a wider experience, especially at the present time, would convince this good person that his former judgment was somewhat erroneous. In most places today the Y does not discriminate on such an unfair basis, and has much to offer to Protestant youth.*

The editors

Blue Island, Ill.

"Do the same principles that you set down for Catholics in regard to the Y.M.C.A. apply to the Salvation Army? May a Catholic donate to the Salvation Army cause?

Mrs. S.K."

*The Salvation Army represents a specific religious sect, with its own definite theological beliefs and its own program of what a person must do to save his soul. A Catholic is not permitted to contribute to the support and spread of a religious sect which his reason and conscience tell him does not contain the full and exact revelation of Christ. However, the Salvation Army does a great deal of charitable work for the poor, and on occasions when one is sure that a gift made to it will be used to allay human suffering and not to promote its*

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*religious beliefs a donation may be made.*

The editors

Anon

"Your article on Catholics and the Y.M.C.A. is a honey. It will be a great loss if this essay is read only by subscribers to your splendid magazine, and is not published in pamphlet form by wider distribution. I was on the staff of the Y for some time and I do not know of another Catholic who was. I was hired, at a good salary, to take part in their musical program. When, after some time, I was asked to help out with the religious program, I quit. I assure you, however, that the religious work of the Y is utterly ineffective. If it were not for the attendance of employees at meetings, there would be nearly empty halls. In my section of the country the Y is down and nearly out, and one of its finest buildings in which young men used to gather to hear fine lectures and take courses in cultural subjects is now just a hang-out for those who have no place to go."

L.M.H."

*This is not true in all sections of the country. Sincere Protestants are making a strong drive at present to revive the Y.M.C.A. and they have succeeded in some parts.*

The editors

Davenport, Iowa

"I have read your article about Catholics and the Y.M.C.A. Many times I was wondering what the Church in this country thought of a Catholic who would join or support the Y.M.C.A. I know by experience that as a Catholic young man in Europe (The Netherlands), we knew better than to have anything to do with the Y.M.C.A. You are doing a fine job with your great magazine, and I am proud to be a subscriber.

F.J.D.G."

*Not all Catholics in the United States have been as unaware of the decree for-*

*bidding membership in the Y.M.C.A. as some of the letters in this section might suggest. The above is only one of many letters we have received whose writers have long taken for granted the conclusions of the article we published on this subject.*

The editors

Glendale, N.Y.

"After reading the article on the Y.M.C.A., I felt I just had to write this letter. You say that a Catholic may not contribute to the Y.M.C.A., yet when the Catholic school was being built in my parish, many of the business-men in the neighborhood, though not Catholics, contributed to it. I am sure God did not frown on this generosity. If there were a Y.M.C.A. building being put up in my neighborhood and I were asked to contribute, I would be telling a lie if I said I would not give. Not because I want to go against the wishes of the Church but because I feel that the Y. would be a much better place for young men than some street corner or bar-room. You also say that a Catholic cannot be a member of the Y. I cannot see what you are afraid of. If a Catholic is brought up with the proper teaching at home and in the Church, I don't see how joining the Y. will affect his religion. I am not the best Catholic in the world, but I am sure that nothing could make me change my religion. The money made on Bishop Sheen's television show is given to people of all creeds. Must their religious creeds and backgrounds be looked into before they receive anything? I think not. Please print this and answer it.

V.C."

*The simple principle at stake here is this: The possession of what one knows to be the truth in religion imposes an obligation on the conscience not to support organizations that stand for the opposite of that truth. People who do not have deep convictions of the truth of one religion can and do make donations to many different organizations including Catholic, without*

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feeling any hurt in their conscience. But a Catholic who really knows that he has the true religion may not support a false one, or an organization based on erroneous religious principles. Bishop Sheen's television income is used, not to help non-Catholic religious organizations, but to relieve human misery, no matter what the religious background of the suffering individuals who receive aid.

The editors

Grand Forks, N. Dakota

"I liked your article on the Y.M.C.A. It is our experience that young people who become active in it turn out to be quite indifferent or 'broad-minded' on the subject of truth in religion. If you are reprinting your article in pamphlet form I would like to order about 1500 or 2000 copies.

Rev. W. Mc."

*The article on the Y.M.C.A. is in pamphlet form at five cents a copy.*

The editors

Wichita, Kans.

"Just as close personal friends help us to fill a void in our personal lives, so you, through your magazine, fill not only a personal but a spiritual void in my life at least. I felt from the very first issue of THE LIGUORIAN that I ever read that your articles were more like letters from one close friend to another than mere explanations of doctrine, and that feeling has continued over the years. I would like to say that readers who write you such abusive letters every time you state the Church's position on some controversial subject should get down on their knees and thank God that a magazine like THE LIGUORIAN is published and that they can read it. But too many people don't like this business of calling a spade a spade, because they are so used to reading wishy-washy, mealy-mouthed publications, that hem and haw and take no positive stands. For my money and my reading, THE LIGUORIAN is one of the top magazines in this country today.

T.C.A., Jr."

This is heart-warming enough to offset many a knock. We do try to address every reader in the spirit of a friend wanting to help a friend.

The editors

Yonkers, N.Y.

"Although I must admit having been forced into acquaintanceship with your magazine by a Sunday Mass sermon, I want to let you know that I have not been disappointed in the least. Your battle against racial bigotry has been especially interesting to me, and only last night I was standing in your boots trying to answer the same hard-headed arguments for prejudice proposed by some of your readers. Unfortunately I lack the one great virtue so necessary in dealing with such people—real Christ-like patience. Realizing that I suffer this inadequacy, I am so happy to be able, if only in a small way, to support you who have dedicated your lives to suffering and humiliation at the hands of the very people you wish to make truly happy. In the light of the present-day frenzied quest of elusive pleasures, forced on us by perfidious advertising, you stand out as one of the few lamps of pure oil.

B.L.K."

Carrollton, Ga.

"Your wonderful publication is outstanding in the field of Catholic literature, which is the only literature worth reading in my opinion. My husband picked up a copy in a church in Baltimore while on a business trip last summer. We have since subscribed and read each issue from cover to cover and then pass it on. You can't realize the tremendous value of your work for us in missions. We have about thirty Catholics in a city of ten thousand. We are served by a priest once a week who must travel fifty miles. Pray for us in your charity. God's blessing on you and all who contribute to THE LIGUORIAN.

Mrs. T.V.B."

# Signposts Upward

*John Fitzpatrick*

## First Place to God

The purpose of this series will be to put the ten commandments of God in their proper light, not only as prohibitions, but as means of fulfillment and further happiness. Too often we regard them only from the negative point of view; they have a positive side as well, and examining them from this point of view will make their observance easier.

We begin with the first commandant.

Of all the duties and responsibilities of man, one is fundamental to all the rest; he must acknowledge his dependence on God; he must not set any creature in the place of God. This was God's first word to Moses, to be engraved on enduring granite:

"I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before me."

### 1. Negative.

By virtue of this commandment, man is forbidden to adore any creature in the place of God. Of old there was a definite reason for a command so specific. The pagan peoples had their hundreds of false gods, made out of wood and stone, or thought to exist in the sun or the powers of nature. The chosen people, although continually warned and punished by God for their fickle turning away from Him, repeatedly fell into idolatry.

In our own time, idolatry is not so blantant or open. Yet false gods are still set up by those who give place to superstitious practices, whether it be fortunetelling, astrology, or trusting in a rabbit's foot to bring good luck. Such practices in the very nature of things offer an insult to God, His providence and His foreknowledge, and hence they are forbidden by the first commandment.

### 2. Positive.

Besides its prohibition, the first commandment carries a directive. We are commanded to give to God the honor and recognition which are His due. This recognition does not necessarily need to be expressed in so many words; It is usually expressed by the fact of going to church and joining with others in sincere prayer. In fact, the fundamental purpose of all prayer is the acknowledgment of our dependence upon God.

That is why the Catholic Church reminds her members of the obligation of praying at certain set times, i.e., morning and evening, before and after meals, in temptation. These are logical times to turn our eyes to God and acknowledge our dependence upon Him.

Fulfilling the duty of prayer is the most important concern of every human being. It is the duty imposed upon us by the first commandment, which tells us to keep God in the first place in our lives, as our Creator, Ruler and Final End.

"Do this," says Christ Himself, "and thou shalt live."

# Teen-Agers and Kissing

Often teen-agers drift into the habit of indiscriminate kissing without having had a chance to think out the implications of this practice. This is to help them *think*.

*Ernest F. Miller*

**I**T is doubtful whether any subject of all the subjects in the world begets more questions in the minds and on the lips of Catholic teen-agers than the subject of kissing. All of a sudden boys and girls hardly out of grade school become intensely interested in this rather common custom of civilized nations. They want to view its moral implications from all angles. And generally they are not content with one answer. They shop around for other answers, especially if the first answer they got was too bitter for their taste.

Are they so interested in the subject because there is some kind of a moral stigma attached to kissing, because there is a wrong connected with it? The truth of the matter is that kissing *in itself* is not wrong. If it were wrong in itself, it would never be allowed, no matter what the provocation or how strong the desire.

Yet, there are many people in one's circle of acquaintances whom one kisses every day. It is taken as a matter of course. Wives kiss their hus-

bands. Parents kiss their children. Children kiss their parents. It is strange that a boy never asks the question, "Is it all right for me to kiss my mother?" It is stranger still that a girl never asks the question, "Is it all right for me to kiss my brother?" After all, a brother is a boy. If there is any doubt about kissing at all, it centers around the kissing that takes place between a girl and a boy. Why, then, should not a girl be concerned about kissing her brother good-bye when he is drafted into the service or comes home from college?

Not only are people kissed right and left without worry or religious qualm, but even things are kissed without disturbance to the conscience. Men and women of all classes and nationalities kiss the toe of St. Peter when they go to Rome. Englishmen kiss the hand of Queen Elizabeth when they go to London and she lets her hand be kissed. Irishmen kiss the Blarney Stone if they are nimble enough to climb to the top of the castle where it lodges. The right to do this type of kissing is never questioned even by the strictest and most rigid. Anyone who would question the right would be looked upon as peculiar.

If kissing is wrong at all, it is because of the circumstances that attend it. And the kissing that teen-agers ask questions about and turn over constantly in their minds is filled with circumstances that cast a shadow upon it.

What kind of kissing is this?

It takes place between a boy and a girl; it is not merely a sign of friendship, it is not a means of welcome or farewell (if so, why is it not done each morning in the class room when school begins, and each night also when school closes?); it is not the affectionate exchange that is customary between members of a family (if so, why is a girl more inclined to kiss a boy

who is not her brother than she is to kiss a boy who is her brother?).

No, none of these. Rather, it is something bound up in mystery and excitement. It has a connection with sex — what the connection is, the young people may not be able to explain. It is a secret rite that must be practiced generally in dark corners and when nobody is looking. This is the kind of kissing that is dangerous. And when certain circumstances are added to it, it can become definitely wrong.

What are some of these circumstances?

A kiss is wrong if it is held too long. One doesn't engage in prolonged kissing with one's mother or father or brother or sister. Therefore, it would seem that when prolonged kissing is engaged in with a friend, there is a reason for it different from that which is found in family affection, courtesy or accepted custom. It is this peculiar reason that makes it wrong.

Prolonged kissing ordinarily causes a certain kind of pleasurable feeling to sweep over the body. This pleasurable feeling is permitted only to married people when they are living up to the implications of their vocation and expressing the true love that they have for one another. Outside of marriage it is forbidden under grave sin. Therefore, prolonged kissing, or petting when defined as prolonged kissing, is seriously wrong. It need scarcely be added that immodest touches of the body that go with such kisses are themselves seriously wrong.

A girl may object to this analysis. She maintains that she is not tempted in her body no matter how prolonged the kissing. She should know that it is possible for a girl to escape such feelings, but that it is almost impossi-

ble for a boy to escape them. A boy is quick to passion. Not one boy out of a hundred escapes temptation in hard and prolonged kissing. If this be so, the girl is just as responsible for the sin as is the boy. She is a party to the sin. She is in a sense responsible for the sin.

In line with these words it goes without saying that many of the motion picture kisses are seriously wrong. So are many of the kisses that are described in popular novels and short stories. Because they are wrong people should not look at them in the pictures or read about them in books. Such looking and reading can also be a source of temptation. The mind can be poisoned with the idea that if passionate kissing is allowed on the screen and between the covers of a book, it cannot be so terribly wrong. And the body can be affected by such descriptions.

Another circumstance that makes kissing wrong is the bad motive that underlies it. Perhaps temptation does not actually follow from the kiss either for the boy or for the girl. But it was hoped that this effect would follow. That was why the kiss was given. That's what made the kiss wrong. The wrongness was in the mind — in the bad motive that existed even before the beginning of the kiss. For some boys and girls this bad motive is almost always present. Therefore their kissing is almost always wrong.

The final circumstance that makes kissing wrong is the scandal that it gives to those who are weak in the practice of virtue. A girl has a good reputation amongst her friends. They look up to her as a model. Maybe she is prefect of the sodality or president of the senior class. Word gets around that this girl does quite a bit of kiss-

ing on her dates. The other girls say, "Well, if she thinks that is O.K., it must be O.K. We'll follow her example and begin to do a bit of kissing on our dates too." This girl is responsible in a sense for all the kissing sins that may grow out of her example.

Is it a sin, then, for a boy and a girl, beyond the pale of first cousinship at the most, ever to kiss each other, even though the kiss be a passing kiss, not prolonged, not passionate, with no evil intention? Is it wrong for two teen-agers to kiss each other good-night when they part after a party that they enjoyed with a group of other teen-agers?

Not necessarily. A passing, transitory kiss, with no bad motive, seldom causes serious temptation in the normal boy and girl. There is really nothing to it. Even so, sensible people advise very strongly against it. There is much to a kiss, even a passing, transitory kiss, not seen by the eye. It has deep meaning. It should not be tossed back and forth as though it had no worth.

Boys and girls who are free with their kisses, giving them to every and any date who happens along, very often have nothing left to give when later on in life the real one comes along whom they wish to make their wife or husband. There is an old saying, known to everybody, that a kiss is a symbol of the heart. Each time a kiss is given away, a small piece of the heart is given away too. Eventually there is no heart left. How can there ever be a true and happy marriage if there is no exchange of hearts?

What is meant is this. There is something cheapening for both the boy and the girl in exchanging on the unimportant occasion of a casual date that which is as sacred as anything that God has given man to enjoy. The

human race has always associated the kiss with love, and love so deep that it binds two people together by solemn oath for all their life. And after the oath is taken, the kiss is one of the links that holds the two of them together during the sometimes hard and stormy days that they must face. The kiss is a cure for quarrels, a reward for sacrifices courageously endured, a sign of sympathy in the hour of sorrow and bereavement, a seal of fidelity and a symbol of unbreakable union.

Should it be used as coin, therefore, in exchange for a night at a movie or an evening of companionship? Those who look upon kissing in this light may come to look upon marriage and children and the responsibility of faithfulness in the same light. All these things are in some way connected. Empty-headed attitudes in regard to one of them will be sufficient proof that there will be empty-headed attitudes in regard to the others too.

When a girl complains that every boy expects her to kiss him at least good-night after they have spent the evening together and after he has spent money on her entertainment, and that if she doesn't kiss him or let him kiss her, she will be looked upon ever afterwards as a stick-in-the-mud and nobody will want to take her out, she is only showing that she has this whole business of teen-age companionship mixed up in her mind.

As was pointed out before, if she is not yet even 16, she shouldn't be going out steady with one boy so that she is afraid he won't take her out anymore if she doesn't kiss him. If she had the right idea about dating, she would have no worries about kissing. If a girl has any sense at all, she will surely not do any kissing with a boy with whom she is going out for the first time and with whom she pos-

sibly won't be going out for a long time in the future. If the companionship has gone so far that the question arises whether it is time to start kissing, the argument should not be about the kissing but about the companionship. The answer should not be that the kissing (if it already has started) should stop, but that the companionship should stop.

Furthermore, a girl ought to be very happy in discovering in time the lack of self-control that some boys are afflicted with. One of the good purposes of the association of teen-age boys and girls is the acquiring of self-control. Certainly a boy desires to kiss a pretty girl; and a girl likes to be kissed by a handsome boy. This is natural. But the desire has to be controlled. Life should not be guided merely by feelings and desires. One who guides his life in that way will end in failure. Thus, if a boy has no self-control and seizes hold of a girl after a date and tries to kiss her, that should be enough proof for the girl that this customer is a poor bet. If he can't control himself in this, he won't be able to control himself in greater and bigger things. It is lucky she found it out in time. She can now leave him strictly alone.

The same rule holds for boys in their relations with girls. If a girl is forever sliding over toward the boy with whom she is on a date, putting her arm around him and showing in every possible way that she wants to be kissed, he should let her out of the car at the first corner. Probably she acts the same with every boy who takes her out. Second-hand goods are never acceptable when new goods are available and can be had for the asking. A girl who easily lets herself be kissed or who seeks kisses because she is convinced that is the best way

to hold a boy is definitely second-hand goods; and it doesn't take a decent boy very long to find it out. When he does find it out, he should be careful to let her find her own level — association with boys who are looking for the girls of "easy to corrupt" reputation.

Of all the sights that are disgusting to the person who has an ounce of knowledge in his head is the sight of the teen-age boy and girl kissing each other in full view of the public — on a bus or a train, in a parked car where passersby can see what is going on, at the beach. Kissing can be sinful, dangerous or at least foolish even when it is done in private, depending on what kind of kissing it is, but when it is done in public, the note of ill manners and deplorable breeding is added. No girl who aspires to be a lady and no boy who is a gentleman at heart can even contemplate so ugly a display of passion, desire and vulgarity without retching. And the words "lady" and "gentleman" are used here not in the sense of sissies or prudes but in the sense of young people who have strength of character, good manners and complete self-control.

The last and best advice that can be given to teen-agers about kissing is to confine it to the members of the family until such time as it can be indulged in without danger or folly and for the purpose for which God invented it. No girl and no boy will have any regrets then that they refused to follow the crowd in their high school days and kept their hearts and their lips to themselves and for God, even though almost everybody else was selling them to every bidder who came along, and so completely soiled them in consequence that they infected the love that was meant to be their happiness on earth.

# The Saint Who Protects Marriage

Many call him the mothers' Saint. He has worked wonders to preserve the married from sin, to help mothers in their time of need, and to bring back those who have fallen. Maybe you need him.

*Francis J. Kinsella*

**L**E'TS celebrate Mothers' Day. Let's talk about the mothers' Saint. This year on October 16th we shall commemorate the bi-centenary of the death of Saint Gerard Majella.

In every age the Church has had its special Saints — souls whose heroic correspondence with the graces of the Holy Spirit made them the chosen instruments of God in furthering His work.

Such a soul was Gerard Majella. Born in the little Italian village of Muro near Naples, April 6, 1726, he excelled even as a child in piety and prayer.

At the age of 23 he entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. He lived six years in religion, and though only a humble lay-brother, so great was his flaming love of God that he achieved a sanctity no less than his great father in religion, Alphonsus Liguori. During his life his sanctity was sealed by God. His was a world of miracles. He had but to pray for those in distress and the impossible came to pass.

Since his death, he has come to be known as the wonder-worker by those praying to him in dire want and need. The poor have found him their patron. The working class have found him the workingman's Saint. Those wandering far from God, away from the sacraments for years, have found him the patron of a good confession. This year, 200 years after his death, a great pilgrimage is being organized, and a

solemn triduum of prayer will be offered to him and to Our Mother of Perpetual Help before the Perpetual Help shrine in St. Alphonsus, Rome. One objective of the pilgrimage is to petition the Holy See to proclaim Gerard Majella the patron of mothers.

Why, you may ask, was this young man, a successful businessman in the world and a humble lay-brother in the convent, chosen by God as the special patron of mothers? His life-span was no more than 29 years. First of all, Gerard Majella spent his life helping the sick and the poor, helping sinners back to God's grace. Today there is a vicious attack on the most sacred function of sex, motherhood. The siren voice of the world would have those elevated in the great sacrament of marriage violate God's law. To help married people to ride down the storm of sin that may threaten their home, God gives them the mothers' Saint.

There was an incident in the life of Saint Gerard which has high-lighted his power in behalf of mothers. On one occasion when visiting a certain family he dropped or forgot his handkerchief, and the little girl of the family picked it up and rushed after Gerard to return it. She was told to keep it. It became a highly prized treasure because even in his life-time the holiness of Gerard Majella became well known. Years later the girl married, and was dying in the process of giving birth to a child. The doctor found no hope for her. At that awful mo-

ment, when death was drawing near, the incident of her childhood came back to her. She knew exactly where they could find the treasured handkerchief. When those around her produced it and gave it to her she was instantly cured, and shortly thereafter delivered a sound and perfect child.

We should, however, search more deeply into the life of Gerard Majella to discover why this young man was chosen by God to be the patron of mothers. First of all, his great love and devotion for the mother of mothers, the Blessed Virgin, fostered in his soul a certain noble conception of womanhood. His great purity of heart and body paid a most flattering tribute to every woman that ever lived. What he held most sacred and holy, namely the sacred, holy function of sex, was permitted by God to become the greatest cross in his life. At one time, he was falsely accused by a sinful woman of having himself been guilty of a great sin of impurity. So grave was the accusation that his superior, St. Alphonsus, punished him and threatened to expel him from the Congregation of The Most Holy Redeemer. God in his own due time defended the innocence of his Saint when the sinful woman repented of her slander and testified that she had lied.

The incident deepened his humility and made more brilliant the luster of his purity. Because of his great purity Gerard knew the sacredness of sex. He knew, for example, that God created the sex appetite in man and regulated the use of sex through the sixth and ninth commandments. In a word, Gerard knew that sexual pleasure was given to man primarily for the purpose of bringing children into the world. Therefore all use of sex outside of marriage is a grave sin. Any use of

sex in marriage, if deliberately separated from its possible natural consequence of procreating children, is gravely wrong.

Because of his great purity of heart Gerard realized the terrible gravity of mortal sins of impurity. He knew, for example, that any deliberate thought or desire, word or action, that produced unlawful sex-pleasure in the body, a pleasure that is identified by its location in the sacred sexual parts of the body, is a grave sin.

Because of his great virtue of purity Gerard knew that the sexual appetite in man is dedicated and consecrated by Almighty God in the holy sacrament of marriage. Those who lawfully marry have the right to enjoy this pleasure of the body, and this sacred function of sex reaches its noblest and most sublime fulfillment in parenthood, in motherhood.

There is something so sacred about the actual process of child-bearing that a good mother, despite her suffering, feels the nearness of God. She feels that very soon heaven will be in her arms. In the process of child-bearing the young generous heart goes down into the valley of death fearless, courageous, so that a new life will come into the world. The maternity ward in the Catholic hospital brings heaven much nearer to earth. The mother awaiting her time, awaiting the arrival of her new-born child, may have been a pagan before, but now at this most sacred moment she wants to become a Saint. She may have had no religion up to now, but there is something so holy and sacred going on inside her body that she becomes much closer to God.

The mother, more than any other human being, comes close to God in the great work of creation. Certainly

father and mother are both necessary for the procreation of children, but the mother's part is more supreme, the mother's part is more sublime, the mother's part is more complete. God is the Father of every child, and the mother in giving birth to a child is most conscious that her heavenly Father is pleased with her.

Saint Paul was able to say, "The woman was in the transgression, but she shall be saved through child-bearing." Saint Paul was talking about the transgression of our first parents and he seems to imply that the mother of the human race was in a sense more to blame than our father, Adam. This fact is certain, when God meted out punishment in the garden of Paradise He sentenced Adam and Eve to the common punishment of work and finally death.

Over and above that, He sentenced the woman to the special punishment, if we may use that term, of bearing children. "I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thou shall be under thy husband's power and he shall have dominion over thee." In other words He made the sublime process of child-bearing an ordeal, and associated with it a certain amount of suffering and uncertainty. We cannot say that pregnancy, motherhood, is a disease or pathological condition, but certainly the process of having a baby is a most complicated and delicate operation, needing competent medical advice and care. The Creator in this way placed upon the woman the heavier burden.

On the other hand, when God imposes a burden He, at the same time, extends the helping hand of His grace. After passing judgment on our first parents, He singled out a woman for the total restoration of man. "I will

put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed, and she shall crush thy head." Here He was talking directly to Satan and was indirectly referring to the Redeemer. So, if we say that God placed the greater burden on the woman, we can likewise say He offered to her the privilege of being identified with the motherhood of God. He glorified in the Blessed Mother the life-giving process of pregnancy, which He singled out as such a tribulation.

Saint Gerard Majella is the patron of mothers because he not only practiced great purity, but he had an overwhelming love for the mother of God. To many proposals of marriage he gave the crisp answer, "I am wedded to my heavenly queen." So the mother in carrying the heavy cross of child-bearing has her hope and inspiration in the mother of all mothers, and she has the privilege of working miracles for herself through the power of the prayers of the mothers' Saint.

The mothers of today need a powerful patron to help them fight the battle against sin in the home. Ever since God punished the human race, man has tried to find ways and means of avoiding the burden of parenthood. He has taxed his knowledge of science to come up with all sorts of devices and drugs in an effort to put asunder what God has joined together, of breaking the bond of marriage when it reaches its highest form in the marital union, the union that produces life itself.

In this terrible cloud of sin that completely covers over the sunshine of God's grace, the birth-controllers, the husband and wife who shout up to heaven "thou shall not create," need no priest, need no Church, to accuse them of their wrong. They car-

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ry within themselves all the uneasiness, anxiety of mind, vexation of spirit, that go with the burden of guilt. Down deep in their hearts if they commit this sin they know it is wrong. There is only the problem of being restored to God's grace. There is the problem of finding strength to spit out the poison of sin in a good confession. God has given them a Saint who is a patron of workingmen and the poor, and who is especially the patron of a good confession.

During Gerard's lifetime the Fathers loved to take him along on their Redemptorist missions. God had given him the power of reading the secrets of the human heart. It was not unusual for Gerard to kneel in the open church when confessions were being heard, and frequently he would suggest to various people secret sins which they were not going to confess, or which they had failed to confess.

Today skilled missionaries still bring St. Gerard along on their missions, and they find that they do not have to preach great tirades against the sin of birth-control, if they offer to the sinner the power and the patronage of St. Gerard. A tiny leaflet containing the prayers to St. Gerard is all that is necessary. The missionary may seem to have a hopeless task arguing with the penitent in the confessional, trying to evoke the necessary contrition and purpose of amendment. But often simply a mention of the name of St. Gerard in the confessional, simply the promise of the penitent to pick up the little leaflet of prayer, is all that is necessary to bring about a miracle of divine grace. It is the grace of conversion where one had been stubborn, or had been arguing, or had steadfastly refused to give up the sin. Suddenly under the power of this patron of good confessions, this patron of moth-

ers, contrition appears and the absolution is given; the leper is cleansed.

Why not celebrate Mothers' Day by offering the following prayer for mothers everywhere:

#### *Against the Forces of Anti-Life*

O great Wonder-Worker of our day, St. Gerard, powerful protector of the mother and her unborn child, beg God, we beseech thee, to crush the mounting forces of anti-life; and to enlighten those who walk in this deadly way that they may see the enormity of their sin and return to the generous observance of the divine law. Pray, too, for mothers that they may prize the great privilege of motherhood and that they may bring up their children in the holy love and fear of God; so saving their own immortal souls and furthering the honor and glory of their Maker through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Pray for us, O great St. Gerard! That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ! Let us pray: O Almighty and Eternal Father, Who, in Thy all-wise Providence, hast deigned to raise up St. Gerard to be the glorious protector of the mother and her unborn child: grant, we beseech Thee, through the powerful intercession of this, Thy servant, that all the diabolical forces of anti-life may be destroyed from the face of the earth forever; that so the Christian family may once more flourish to the praise and eternal glory of Thy Holy Name. This we ask through the merits of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, God for ever and ever. Amen.

#### *Write to*

**THE LEAGUE OF ST. GERARD**

Liguori, Mo.

*For free Medals, Prayer-Leaflets, and information.*

# Happenings in Rome

Monthly round-up of significant events in the capital of Christendom.

*Christopher McEnniry*

## *Always The Queen:*

When Pope Pius XII gave us the new feast of the Queenship of Mary, he introduced no new devotion into the Church of God. For, he reminds us, she has always been lovingly called "Queen."

We and our forefathers have repeated that charming antiphon: "Hail, holy Queen," as well as, "Hail, Queen of heaven," and "*Regina coeli* — Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia!" On her feasts we chant: "On Thy right hand stands the Queen clothed in white," and, "The whole earth applauds Thee, powerful Queen," and, "Today the Virgin Mary goes up into heaven; rejoice ye, for there she reigns with her Son, eternal Queen." And in the Litany of Loreto — "Queen of angels, Queen of Apostles, Queen of Virgins," she is everybody's Queen. And when we offer her that mystical crown of roses, the last fragrant flower in that diadem is "The fifth glorious mystery, Mary is crowned Queen of angels and men."

The Pope passed rapidly down the ages citing from the great lights of both the Western and the Eastern Church, their powerful appeals to our heavenly Queen.

## *Pope Pius IX:*

February 7 was the seventieth anniversary of the death of Pope Pius IX, the Pope of the Immaculate Conception. The group of ecclesiastics promoting the cause of his beatification and canonization arranged for a solemn mass of suffrage at his tomb in

the Church of St. Lawrence-outside-the-Walls. That is the church wrecked by American bombs and rebuilt with the help of generous contributions from America. Throughout his long pontificate this glorious Pope suffered from some of the fiercest and most insidious attacks against the Church. Already we have seen the tragic fate of governments, empires and nations responsible for these attacks.

## *St. Paul's Basilica:*

"*O felix Roma!*" Hail, happy Rome, privileged to possess the sacred remains of the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul!

The ancient military road leading from the Eternal City to the sea is called the "*Via Ostiensis*." St. Paul was taken out on this road and beheaded for the Divine Christ he loved so ardently. His body was buried nearby. When the Roman Emperor Constantine became a Christian and the hidden Church was able to come forth from the catacombs, the Emperor himself raised a magnificent basilica over the tomb of the Apostle. For fifteen hundred years the sacred pavement was worn down by the feet of pilgrims coming from all parts of the world to pray at this glorious tomb.

On the fatal night of July 25, 1823, fire destroyed this monument of faith. The Pope appealed to Christians everywhere to help him to rebuild it. The response was generous, like the generous soul of the hero they wished to honor. A temple of marble and mosaics, a triumph of piety and art,

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soon graced this hallowed spot. In the year 1854, two days after the solemn promulgation of the Immaculate Conception, Pope Pius IX, surrounded by the Cardinals, Primates, Archbishops and Bishops of the Universal Church, blessed with his own hands the sacred pile. On the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the consecration of "St. Paul's-outside-the-Walls," Pope Pius XII sent one of his masterly letters and his Apostolic Benediction to the Benedictine monks who chant so solemnly the Divine Praises at the tomb of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

#### Pope to Publishers:

When Pius XII spoke to the "Catholic Book Publishers' Union," he discussed paper and type and proof-reading and binding and attractiveness and especially arrangement, which last he said makes of their product a "work of art."

One marvels at his knowledge of detail in every industry, in every profession and in every art. But perhaps there is less reason to marvel here. Among the most constant companions and dearest friends of the seventy-eight year old Pontiff have always been BOOKS. He wants them to be as lovely in appearance as in contents.

You have your difficulties and your problems, he said, in being Catholic Book Publishers in the truest and noblest sense of the word. But if the task were easy, what merit would you have? To illumine, elevate, nourish minds and hearts is the duty as well as the noble privilege of the printed word. We are convinced that you fully appreciate this high mission and that you courageously gird yourselves to study attentively the intellectual and moral problems to be mastered in the formation and perfecting of an editor. For yours is one of the most impor-

tant and fruitful fields in the whole lay apostolate.

#### Catholic Columbia:

The President of the Republic of Columbia does not share the sentiments of the persecutor Peron of Argentine but rather those of the President of the sister Republic of Peru. He said:

"In the centenary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception which closes our third National Marian Congress, I, as head of the nation and fervent Catholic, consecrate the Republic to the most Blessed Virgin.

"Once again our Fatherland proclaims the Queenship of Mary with the firm resolve to continue to live under her maternal protection. I join in the profound religious fervor of the people in imploring from the Most High God, through the intercession of our heavenly patron, His divine blessing upon us all — upon the Government that it may be honest, active and prudent in devising and in applying the principles of peace, justice and liberty — upon the governed that they, out of homage to the mothers of our land who taught our childish lips to pronounce the sweet, consoling name of Mary, may forgive one another and live together in harmony.

"As Mother of God and Queen of men may she make us good citizens, faithful to the precepts of the Catholic Church and docile to her representatives so that we may, with a quiet conscience, look forward to the hour of death and the final sentence."

#### Principles For Lawyers:

A masterpiece of juridical analysis, that will go down in history, is the Pope's address to the "Union of Italian Catholic Jurists." It should be read

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and pondered by every jurist conscious of his grave responsibility before God and civil society. He delivered the first and second part of the address before his recent illness. So insistent was the request of those who had heard it that he completed the third part while on his bed of pain and had it published.

Going profoundly into the subject, he examines and states clearly the nature of guilt and the nature of the punishment incurred by guilt. He shows that they must be clearly distinguished, the one from the other, and he points out how the criminal is often freed from the one without being freed from the other.

He touches on the vexing question of condonation or parole. It must not, he says, be granted arbitrarily. The welfare of the culprit and the welfare of society must both be carefully weighed. If in the enforcement of penal law strict justice alone is considered, injustice may result. Condonation and parole may be taken into consideration in every case where the intrinsic purpose of the condemnatory sentence has been attained, where the culprit has really repented of his crime and this repentance promises to be enduring.

### Protecting Youth:

The Roman chief of police has issued a prohibition to install billiard rooms, mechanical race courses and games of chance anywhere except in amusement parks. While they were allowed all over the city, worried parents were sending in complaint after complaint. The grievance: the young boys were frequenting these gaming places. They were making raids on the paternal till and resorting to even more lawless expedients to secure the necessary funds.

### Colored Republic Favored:

The Pope sometimes sends one of his Cardinals to preside at a great ecclesiastical function. This Cardinal is called a Legate, a personal representative of the Pope himself. As a rule he sends a Legate only to an international, or at least a national, gathering of importance to the universal Church.

There were many celebrations during the Marian year where Catholics were very eager to have the favor of a Papal Legate, and often their desire could not be fulfilled. However the Pope, in order to show his love for the colored people, took care to send a Legate to the Marian congress in Nigeria, the colored republic of West Africa. Since the republic uses English, the Pope chose our own Cardinal McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles. The Cardinal was accompanied by Monsignor McGeough, domestic prelate of His Holiness, and Monsignor Calderari, pontifical master of ceremonies.

In his letter to the congress the Pope noted how the first missionaries to Nigeria belonged to the Society of the Immaculate Conception, and the Fathers of the Holy Ghost, who followed them, made their first foundation in Nigeria on the eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and this great Marian congress was celebrated on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

"To you," he said, "our beloved Sons and daughters of Nigeria, we earnestly recommend that you always cherish a deep devotion to Mary the Immaculate Mother of God and our own Mother. Consecrate yourselves, your labors, your homes, your families and your country to her Immaculate Heart. Let her be the Queen of your hearts, Queen of Nigeria."

# Thoughts for the Shut-In

*Leonard F. Hyland*

## Shut-In Sodalists

For May, the month of our Lady, it seems appropriate to say something about a special means offered to the sick to honor her. We refer to membership in the sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This very venerable organization has made its way into every part of the world, wherever are to be found people devoted to the mother of Christ. It was founded as a special means of honoring her, of invoking her intercession, of declaring oneself openly her child. The sodality became a powerful auxiliary in the spread of the faith and the apostolate for doing good. In our own country the sodality has flourished, and the name of the late Father Daniel Lord, S.J., will ever be remembered for his work in fostering this militia of our Lady.

The shut-in may say: What has all this got to do with me? I am in no position to take part in any such organization.

If that is your reaction, permit us to introduce you to Miss Mary Ellen Kelly, of Marcus, Iowa. Miss Kelly, still young in years, has long been the victim of aggravated rheumatoid arthritis; the disease has advanced to the point of inducing almost complete bodily paralysis. But Miss Kelly, despite her immobility and her sufferings, is far from wasting time in bemoaning her fate. She is, in fact, more active and alert than many who are in complete possession of their health.

Miss Kelly is the foundress and president of the League of Shut-In Sodalists, which has a three-fold purpose:

1. To unite the sick, aged, and disabled, in prayer and suffering for the honor and glory of God and the salvation of souls.
2. To foster in members an ardent devotion to the Blessed Mother and to attain through the helps of the sodality a more intimate union with Christ crucified.
3. To show members the value, need, and power of illness or deformity.

Eligible for membership is any person who is physically afflicted so that sight, hearing or walking is seriously impaired. Miss Kelly publishes an interesting little paper, called *Seconds Sanctified*, for her League members, with much shut-in news and pertinent information. It appears six times a year. In addition, she has developed the idea of the shut-ins' pilgrimage, and on such a pilgrimage to Rome a few years ago received the special and personal commendation of Pope Pius XII.

We feel that many of our shut-in readers may be interested in the League of Shut-In Sodalists, and we commend it to them most heartily, urging them to write to Mary Ellen Kelly, Marcus, Iowa, for further information.



## *Sideglances*

*By the Bystander*

The fact that, among Catholics, May is the month of Mary, and that this year, on May 31, the universal feast of the Queenship of Mary will be celebrated for the first time, brings to mind a small item we clipped from *Newsweek Magazine* last December. At that time the world was ringing with the final, glorious prayers and hymns and celebrations with which Catholics were closing the Marian year, and the Holy Father was announcing the new feast of Mary's Queenship for May 31 of every year. *Newsweek*, in the column we clipped, quoted a Protestant minister's reaction to all this. He was Dr. Thomas Boslooper, pastor of a Reformed Church at Closter, N.J., and this is what he had to say: "The development of dogma pertaining to Mary and the increase of interest in the mother of Jesus in the life of the Roman Church are not only deepening the gulf between Catholics and Protestants, but also point prophetically to the day, should this trend continue, when Protestantism may be the sole heir to the faith once delivered to the saints. . . . The new devotion to Mary has thrown Romanism back to the Dark Ages. . . . the essence of Christianity is that redemption is in Christ alone."

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Without the least sense of bitterness, or even testiness, we should like to comment on the good minister's interpretation of present-day Catholic devotion to the mother of God. First of all, as to the phrase that "it is deepening the gulf between Catholics and Protestants." The gulf of which Dr. Boslooper speaks was dug wide and deep, not by Catholics, but by the so-called reformers of less than four hundred years ago, who first turned against the fifteen hundred-year-old tradition of devotion to

Mary as God's mother, and began to preach that she has no intercessory power in the affairs of men. Catholics have done nothing, in the four hundred years that have intervened, to deepen the gulf that the founders of Protestantism dug. They have simply gone about their business of handing down, from generation to generation, what they had received from the apostolic ages. It is true that different ages have been marked by ups and downs in the intensity of devotion to Mary, but all the doctrines or "dogmas," if you will, on which the devotion rests have been an implicit or explicit part of the Catholic heritage since the beginning. It is true that modern Popes have specifically defined and promulgated such doctrines or truths as that of Mary's immaculate conception, and that of her assumption into heaven; but anyone who reads the definitions themselves, or the voluminous commentaries upon them, will recognize that the Pope's voice in defining them is merely echoing the voice of all Christian history, at least till the gulf spoken of above was dug in the sixteenth century. A saintly Pope, in the year 1954, brought forth a great upsurge of devotion to Mary from Catholics around the world; he did not do it to spite Protestants, or to "deepen any gulfs;" he merely used what had always been part of the Church to bring more and more people back to God.

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Then there is the phrase in Dr. Boslooper's statement, that "increase of interest in the mother of God points prophetically to the day when Protestantism will be the sole heir to the faith once delivered to the saints." Delivered to what saints? we ask. In his encyclical establishing the feast of the Queenship of Mary, Pope Pius XII

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quotes not only the Scriptures, but doctors and saints from almost every era of Christianity, going back to its first, to prove that Mary was always accepted as a queen, capable of winning favors for her subjects, by the "saints" who have left a record of their Christian beliefs. It would seem that Dr. Boslooper knows only four centuries of history, and can have in mind, when speaking of the "faith delivered to the saints," only such "saints" as Luther and Melanthon and Calvin and Knox. These were the first Christian figures who testified to their disbelief in the intercessory power of the mother of God. And if the faith was really delivered to them, it had to leap over fifteen centuries of beliefs and practices, especially concerning Mary, that were contrary to what they began to teach the world. But if we look to the real saints and the early Christian saints, to such men as St. Ephraim and St. Augustine and St. Hilary and St. John Chrysostom, we find the "faith delivered to the saints" included a fond and child-like devotion to Mary as the mother of God, and the spiritual mother of men as well.

Our minister also speaks of the new devotion to Mary as "throwing Romanism back to the Dark Ages." We wonder what ages he has in mind as "dark." Does it consider past ages "dark" if they were marked by great devotion to Mary? True scholars, for example, recognize the 13th century to have been one of the greatest of all time, marked by tremendous achievements in the arts, in philosophy and theology, in social harmony and peace. But it was also a century of great devotion to Mary. Did that mark it a dark age in the mind of Dr. Boslooper? Yet in that one respect, of devotion to Mary, it was essentially no different than all the other ages. Some ages were especially marked by wars, and some by a decline of morals (even among some of the clergy), and

some by persecution of the true religion on the part of pagans or barbarians. But in all of them it will be found upon investigation that there was the same faith concerning Mary's place in the scheme of salvation for men, the same practices of devotion, even, to a large extent, the same prayers.

The end of Dr. Boslooper's quotation states one truth that no Catholic will ever doubt or reject, viz., that "the essence of Christianity is that redemption is in Christ alone." This dogma may be found in every single Catholic theology that has ever been printed; without Christ there is no redemption for anybody, indeed, not even for Mary, because her immaculate conception or complete freedom from original sin was granted her through the anticipated merits of her Son. But Dr. Boslooper evidently interprets this true dogma to mean that Christ wanted nobody, least of all Mary, to have any instrumental or helpful part to play in leading men to share in His redemptive work, or to help them to be faithful to Him once they had accepted His redemption. The contrary is obvious to Catholics. Christ made the work of others, both in the natural and supernatural order, in some way helpful and effective and even in a sense necessary to lead us to Him. Our parents have to help us to know Christ and accept Him and be obedient to Him. The apostles and their successors, the evangelists who wrote the Scriptures, were all intended by Christ to be instrumental in leading souls to Him. Why, then, not also His mother, who was so closely associated with Him as He worked out our redemption, so exquisite an example of what Christ's grace could do for a soul, so dear to God the Father and God the Son, that all followers of Christ would instinctively look to her for intercession and inspiration? We don't look to Mary for our redemption: we know that Christ alone could and did redeem us. But we joyously accept all the helps Christ gave us to cling

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to Him, among them the best and sweetest and most consoling: Mary as our mother.

In establishing the feast of the Queenship of Mary, Pope Pius XII makes it clear that he is declaring no new title for Mary. The name "Queen" has been given to her from the earliest ages of Christianity, and there can be no Catholic who has not often applied it to her in the "Hail, Holy Queen," the litany of Loreto, and in many traditional and popular hymns and prayers. The Pope's purpose in setting up the new feast is twofold: 1) to lift up the hearts of the many thousands who are depressed by the evil in the world, fearful of impending catastrophes, worried about their families and their future. Thoughts of Mary as the Queen of heaven and earth will keep such

as these mindful of eternity and of the royal court of heaven to which they are destined, while they will also inspire perseverance in prayer to the great Queen for needed temporal blessings. 2) To awaken a renewed sense of responsibility on the part of civic, political and national leaders and office-holders. It is widely forgotten or denied today that all human authority comes from God. Mary's rule as "Queen" comes only from God, and is an example of a rule in which God's will is supreme. The Holy Father hopes that if men in authority think of Mary the Queen as perfectly carrying out the wishes and commands of God, they will realize that only in the same way can they be of service to their subjects and pleasing in the eyes of God.

### **Prayer of Reparation for Blasphemy**

**By Pope Pius XII**

Oh, Most August Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, although infinitely happy from all eternity in and for Thyself, deign to accept graciously the homage which ascends from universal creation to Thy exalted throne. Turn away Thine eyes, for this we beseech Thee, and withdraw Thine ears from those unfortunate persons who, being either blinded by passion or carried away by diabolical impulse, wickedly blaspheme Thy Name and that of the most pure Virgin Mary and of the Saints. Restraine, O Lord, the arm of Thy justice which could reduce to nothing those who dare to become guilty of such great impiety.

Accept the hymn of glory which rises incessantly from all nature: from the water which flows limpid and silent from the spring, to the stars which impelled by love, shine and revolve in immense arcs in the heights of the heavens. Accept in reparation the chorus of praises which rises, an incense before the altars, from so many saintly souls who without ever straying walk in the pathways of Thy law and with constant works of charity and penance seek to placate Thy outraged justice. Listen to the chant of so many chosen spirits, who consecrate their lives to the celebration of Thy glory, the perennial praise which the Church offers Thee at every hour and under all the heavens.

And grant that one day, with all blasphemous hearts converted to Thee, every tongue and every mouth may harmoniously join in intoning here below that canticle which resounds without end in the choir of angels: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts. The heavens and the earth are filled with Thy glory. Amen.



## Catholic Anecdotes

### Blessed Nuisance

When I took a furnished room a few doors from a Catholic Church, wrote Mrs. L. E. Meter, in the *Road to Damascus*, it never crossed my mind that the location might have drawbacks. At seven-thirty, on my first morning, I was awakened by shuffling feet. I peered out of the window and saw a group of children, shepherded by nuns, on their way to Mass. Every morning that week, the same "nuisance" took place. On Sunday the hubbub was greater, and in addition it started at six and lasted till noon.

Things had come to a pretty pass, when a white, native-born Protestant couldn't enjoy an extra forty winks on a Sunday morning. I could lie in bed as long as I wished, but I definitely could not enjoy it. I kept thinking of all those people going to Church—going to Church—going to Church! And in the end it wore me down. I figured that in a throng that size, one non-Catholic might escape detection, so I played my hunch and it worked. I prided myself on kneeling, sitting and standing at just the right times.

Sometimes today, I hear converts boasting that Bishop Sheen or Father So-and-So led them to the faith. Few can make the boast I can. I was driven there by three hundred and fifty parochial-school pupils shuffling their way to daily Mass. Thanks, kids!

### Wasted Effort

Father James O'Connor had finally persuaded a fallen-away Catholic in

the Fiji Islands to come back to the Church. The "black sheep" started trying to prove to himself and the missionary that "he hadn't really stopped being a practicing Catholic."

"I didn't go to Mass for years, Father," said he, "but I never touched meat on Fridays."

"I'm sure God will chalk that up to your credit," the Columban Father replied. "But you have been keeping an unnecessary commandment all these years. The Pope has given the Fijis a special dispensation, and you've been missing a good meal on Fridays since you stayed away from the Church."

### Redeeming the Worker

Don Giuseppe Boninsegna is a courageous, thirty-five-year-old priest, in Italy's most communistic village—Gaggio di Piano in Bologna Province.

"In this Red stronghold," says Don Giuseppe, "Liberty and Work have been raised to the state of divinity like two gods."

The priest decided to try to win these people to Christ by showing how He worked as a carpenter, and a large basrelief scene appears on the front of a church recreation building called "The Home of the Workers," depicting the carpenter shop at Nazareth. On the day of the unveiling, over 800 of the people of the village attended Mass, and many have since become regular church-goers. Don Giuseppe says:

"My desire is to bring ever closer the Italian worker to Him Who, first by work, and then by His Blood, redeemed them."



## Pointed Paragraphs

### *What Mothers Are*

The world has made a great thing out of the celebration of Mothers' Day. Children (young or old) who are absent from their mothers, send them loving greeting cards, flowers, and presents of various kinds. Those who still have their mothers near them have parties for them, or take them out to dinner, and give them some reminder of their gratitude and love. Most Catholics, of course, also receive Holy Communion for their mothers on Mothers' Day.

What is a mother, and what makes a mother capable of drawing forth such tributes from her children? A mother is an overflow of the love of God into this world. A mother is an exemplification on earth of how God loves all His human creatures. A mother is a creation of God, chosen to cooperate with Him in a creative work, endowed with a special share of His love through which her children can be led back to Him. Every human being is intended by God to catch a glimpse of Himself and His love in the love of its mother.

But mothers are not automatically and unwillingly what God intended them to be. Each one is a free agent, endowed with mighty instincts of love, it is true, but capable still of distorting the special image of God's love they were meant to be. That is why there are good mothers and bad mothers in the world.

A good mother is one who remembers and often meditates on three things.

1) That the creative power of her

body that produced a child was a gift of God, and that it would have produced nothing of value if God had not directly created an immortal soul for each child she brought into the world.

2) That the special love with which God endowed her, making her fiercely and gloriously eager to make her children happy, is really God's love, and that the happiness she seeks for her children must be the eternal happiness God wanted for them when He created their souls.

3) That anything that separates her from the love of God, any form of selfishness or pride or irreligion or sin, makes her the opposite of what God intended her to be on granting her a creative power and a powerful love.

It is the magnificent ideal of mothers who see themselves as an overflow of God's love, an instrument of God's eternal purposes, that the world honors on Mothers' Day. May every mother who has lost sight of this, her highest honor, be brought back to an understanding of it on this Mothers' Day.

### *May Devotions*

After the Marian Year, during which Pope Pius XII inspired so many meditations and celebrations that centered around the mother of Christ as "the most sweet mother of men," there should be an upsurge of expressions of devotion to Mary during her special month, the month of May.

Catholics should express this devotion in one or all of these three ways.

First of all, in their private and in-

dividual lives. Something special should be added to each one's morning and night prayers as a plea for the special intercession of Mary. It may be only a few extra Hail Marys, or the recitation of the *Memorare*, or the saying of Mary's litany. Persons who live alone or who have little time with their families should make certain to say the rosary every day during May.

Then in every Catholic home there should be family devotions. There should be an altar erected to Mary somewhere in the home. All the ingenuity and love should be put into the erection and adorning of these May altars that, in good families, are put into the setting up of a crib at Christmas time. The children should be taught to keep fresh flowers before the family altar. The family should recite its daily rosary around the altar.

Lastly, every Catholic should try to take some part in parish devotions during May. The Church allows and even urges every pastor to hold daily devotions in honor of Mary in his parish church during the month of May. In past years we have seen such devotions grossly neglected by the people of many parishes. Only a handful of the parishioners would be present each evening. It should not be so this year. This is the year in which all Catholics should want to show that the Marian year of 1954 was not wasted on them.

The practice of making May the month of Mary by special devotions goes back many centuries — far beyond the century of the reformation, when men first preached that Mary should be forgotten and neglected. Catholics of today have to hand down the tradition to the next generation. They need to remember the historically proven axiom, that, when Mary is forgotten, Christ will soon be forgotten too.

### *Chance for Children*

Childless husbands and wives, who have been interested in adopting children, have often complained to us of the great difficulty of finding a child, or a couple of children, whom they might adopt. Some have waited in line three or four or five years before their petition for a child, to religious, state or private charity-organizations, could be granted.

Now suddenly there has arisen an opportunity for childless married couples to satisfy their desire to have an adopted child and to perform an especially glorious deed of mercy and charity. It seems that there are thousands of children, born of American occupation soldiers and Japanese mothers, abandoned and stranded and outcast in Japan.

We have been sent this description of the situation by a mother who has already taken two such children into her home: "Catholic orphanages are overflowing with these little tots facing a future very dark and dismal, since they are the victims of strict segregation and will apparently be social outcasts down through the years through no fault of their own. Race prejudice facing these youngsters is so extreme that they are rejected in their local communities and no local school will accept them."

Certainly Americans should feel an indebtedness toward these children, born of their soldier-representatives in Japan. The United States Government has passed the Refugee Relief Act, under which such children may be brought into this country by parents who will care for them on a non-quota basis. However the law extends only up to December 31st of this year. Obtaining one of these lost children cannot be put off to next year.

Any husbands and wives, or moth-

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ers and fathers, who are interested in taking one or two of these children may obtain full information about procedure by writing to Mrs. D. F. Lynch, 932 18th St. North, Seattle, 2, Wash. The Lynches have five daughters of their own, but have just recently taken two six-year-old American-Japanese girls to add to their family. There are thousands more — both boys and girls — in need of foster parents and a hopeful future in America.

#### *The Problem of the Aged*

It becomes more and more clear in our time that we are gradually becoming a nation of old people. Figures compiled by Father John Lennon, assistant director of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, serve to highlight this fact. Since 1900 the number of people over 65 in the United States has quadrupled. By 1940 there were 9 million; by 1980 there will be at least 20 million, or 10 percent of the estimated population for that year.

We are not concerned here with the causes of this phenomenon, which stem from a decreasing birth-rate and an increasing life-expectancy.

Whatever be the causes, we are faced with a situation, and charity and justice require us to meet it.

What are the obligations flowing from this situation?

On the part of employers, they should do what they can within reason to continue older people in employment. The dread feeling of uselessness is one of the chief crosses of old age. Employers will be performing a great work of charity if they will search for means of giving even those of their workers who are at the retirement age

some small employment. We hear of firms which arbitrarily and heartlessly set an age limit by decrees against which there is absolutely no appeal.

Then as regards housing for the aged; a first principle of charity and justice is surely this, that, if it can be done without disruption of the family, they should be cared for by their children in their own homes. Many families are all too ready to unload their aged parents on convalescent homes, often occasioning heartbreak which may some day by a just judgment come back upon themselves.

We realize full well that in some cases there is a necessity of removing aged people to institutions founded for their care. There are in fact 290 old people's homes in the United States under Catholic auspices, caring for some 25,000 residents. The number of homes is very inadequate for the growing need. Hence the obligation devolves upon all of supporting such institutions as may need help, and contributing to the enlargement of existing facilities. This is a matter of concern to all of us, for all of us may one day need the help we now extend to others.

And of course there is the obligation of developing an attitude of kindness, consideration and charity to the aged. Old age has its own special problems: loneliness, a feeling of inadequacy, helplessness. Life has perhaps robbed the aged of their early enthusiasms, but genuine kindness is able to warm the human heart at no matter what age.

Thus if the aged try to be patient, and the young try to be kind, it will be a much happier world.

Many a man believes in heredity until his son begins acting like a darn fool.



# Siguoriana



## EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

*Selected and Edited by John Schaefer*

### THE PRACTICE OF THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST

#### CHAPTER VI

#### CHARITY IS NOT AMBITIOUS

One who loves God does not strive for the good opinion and love of his fellow-men. Rather, every desire of his heart, every effort of his will is bent to attracting the favor of Almighty God. For God alone is the object of his love.

St. Hilary writes that all honor paid by the world is the handiwork of the devil. And truly it is, for when the enemy infects a soul with the desire of esteem he is trafficking for hell. In such a manner does he induce the soul to abandon humility and to run the risk of plunging into every vice.

St. James describes God as conferring His graces openhandedly upon the humble, but closing them against the proud, whom He resists. "God resists the proud, and gives His grace to the humble." Note that the apostle says that God *resists* the proud. He does not even listen to their prayers. And certainly, among the acts of pride must be numbered the desire to be honored by men and the self-exaltation indulged in upon receiving honors from them.

History is full of frightful examples of this inordinate seeking after the honors of the world. Men and women, who were considered to be highly advanced in the spiritual life, have, when loaded with flattery and honor, been found to be but statues with feet of clay. A great servant of God has wisely said that when we hear or read of the fall of some towering cedars of

Libanus — of a Solomon, a Tertullian, an Osius, all of whom had the reputation of being saints — it is a sign that they were not wholly given to God, that they nourished some secret pride and thus fell away.

Let us, therefore, be on our guard when we feel arise within us an ambition to appear in public and to be esteemed by the world. When the world pays us some tribute of honor, let us beware of placing too much store in it, for it may prove to be the cause of our complete ruin.

But we must especially be on guard against all ambitious seeking of preference and oversensitiveness in points of honor. Many persons profess to lead a spiritual life, but inwardly they are worshippers of themselves. They have the outward appearance of certain virtues, but are ambitious of being praised in all their undertakings. If unable to find others to praise them, they praise themselves. In other words, they attempt to appear better than others. And if their honor be but touched, they lose all peace of mind, give up the practice of prayer and other devotions and find no rest until they imagine that they have recovered their former position.

The true lovers of God, however, do not behave in such a manner. They not only carefully avoid every word of self-esteem and all self-complacency, but they are even saddened at hearing themselves commended by oth-

ers. They find their delight in being considered lowly by the rest of men.

The saying of St. Francis of Assisi, "What I am before God, that I am," is most true. Of what value is it to pass for great in the eyes of the world if before God we are vile and worthless? And on the other hand, what matters it if we be despised by the world but are dear and acceptable in the eyes of God.

St. Augustine writes: "The approbation of one who praises does not heal a bad conscience, nor does the reproach of one who blames wound a good conscience." Just as one who praises us cannot deliver us from the chastisement of our evil doing, so neither can one who blames us rob us of the merits of our good actions. "What does it matter," says St. Teresa, "that we be condemned and scorned by creatures, if before Thee, O God, we are great and without blame?"

Thus the saints had no other desire than to live hidden and unknown lives, to be considered beneath consideration by others. St. Francis de Sales writes: "What wrong do we suffer when people have a bad opinion of us, for this ought to be our opinion of ourselves? Perhaps it is that we know that we are bad and wish to pass ourselves off as good before others."

What security is to be found in the hidden life for such souls as wish genuinely to love Jesus Christ! Our Lord Himself set us the example by living a hidden and despised life for 30 years in the workshop of Nazareth. With the same purpose of escaping the esteem of men the saints followed His example and went and hid themselves in deserts and caves. St. Vincent de Paul has said that a love of appearing in public, of being spoken of in terms of

praise, of hearing our works or conduct commended, is an evil which contaminates our best actions. For while it makes us unmindful of God it thus proves to be a most fatal drawback to the spiritual life.

To make progress, therefore, in the love of Jesus Christ, we must deal the death-blow to this love of self-esteem. But how can this be done? St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi instructs us in this manner: "That which fosters the appetite for self-esteem is the occupying of a favorable position in the minds of all. Consequently the death of self-esteem is to keep oneself hidden, so as not to be known to anyone. And until we learn to die in this manner, we shall never be true servants of God."

To be pleasing in the sight of God, then, we must avoid all ambition of appearing and of showing ourselves off in the eyes of men. With even greater caution we must shun the ambition of governing others. Rather than behold this accursed ambition set its foot in the convent, St. Teresa declared that she would prefer to have the whole convent burned and all the nuns with it. Such a horror did she have of any nun seeking to become a superior, that she exclaimed that such a one should be expelled from the convent.

St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi said: "The honor of a spiritual person consists in being placed below all, and in abhorring all superiority over others." The ambition of a soul that loves God should be to excel all others in humility, according to the counsel of St. Paul: "In humility let each esteem others better than themselves." In a word, he who loves God, must make God the sole object of his ambition.

Ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt. — *Cardinal Newman.*



## BOOK LOVERS DEPARTMENT

Conducted by Thomas Tobin

### CATHOLIC AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

George N. Shuster, 1894 -

#### I. Life:

On August 27th, 1894, George Nauman Shuster was born in Lancaster, Wisconsin. His parents were Anthony and Elizabeth Nauman Shuster. The Capuchin Fathers at St. Lawrence College, near Fond du Lac, gave Shuster his secondary education. The Bachelor's and Master's degrees were obtained at the University of Notre Dame. During World War I, Mr. Shuster served in the Intelligence Corps and also remained as an interpreter with the army of occupation in Germany. After his discharge from the army he returned to Notre Dame as head of the English Department and as associate editor of the *Ave Maria Magazine*. In 1924 he married Doris Parks Cunningham and one son has blessed their marriage. Shuster went to New York in 1924 and joined the group of Catholic laymen who were planning to publish the *Commonweal Magazine*. Since 1925 he has been associated with the *Commonweal* as assistant editor, managing editor and contributing editor. He has also held positions on the staffs of various colleges. Several grants enabled him to study in Europe. In 1940 he became president of Hunter College, the largest women's college in the

world. He still holds this position.

#### II. Writings:

Most of Mr. Shuster's written work centers around two favorite fields: English Catholic literature and Germany. His interest in Catholic literature is evidenced in several books: *The Catholic Spirit in Modern English Literature* and *The Catholic Church and Current Literature*. The other interest of Shuster is manifest in the following books: *The Germans*, *The Strong Man Rules* and an edition of *Mein Kampf*. He has also translated from the German the well known books: *Jesse and Maria*, the novel by Handel-Manzetti, *Job the Man Speaks With God*, and *The Vatican as A World Power*.

#### III. The Book:

Mr. Shuster has made a life long study of the wide field of Catholic literature. One of his latest works is the monumental *The World's Great Catholic Literature*, a collection that embraces many countries and many centuries. The selections are well made and cover the various sections of Catholic literature. This book will introduce many fine Catholic authors to readers.

## MAY BOOK REVIEWS

### BIOGRAPHIES

*The Story of Thomas More*. By John Farrow. 242 pp. New York, N. Y.: Sheed and Ward. \$3.50.

*A Man Born Again*. By John E. Beahn. 208 pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$3.00.

*The Spirit of Venerable Libermann*. By Most

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Rev. Jean Gay. 235 pp. Staten Island, N. Y.: Society of St. Paul. \$3.00.

*St. Dominic Servant But Friend.* By Sister M. Assumpta O'Hanlon, O.P. 182 pp. St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Co. \$3.50.

*Schoolteacher and Saint.* By Pascal P. Partente, S.T.D. 170 pp. St. Meinrad, Ind.: Grail Publications. \$3.00.

*Brother Isidore.* By Nicholas Schneiders, C.P. 82 pp. St. Meinrad, Ind.: Grail Publications. \$.25.

*The Story of Chaplain Kapaun.* By Rev. Arthur Tonne. 255 pp. Emporia, Kansas.: Didde Publications. \$3.00.

The noble figure of St. Thomas More has captivated many biographers in the centuries since his martyrdom. John Farrow, the author of *Damien the Leper*, has given us *The Story of Thomas More*. Farrow has not sought to give a definitive biography but a character sketch of a charming and saintly person. Against the background of his troubled times Thomas More emerges as one of the few great and principled men of his day. Farrow has succeeded in presenting a living picture of this great man.

*A Man Born Again*, by John E. Beahn, the author of *A Rich Young Man*, is another biography of More. With literary license Beahn tells the story in the first person. In so doing he, in general, presents a true and interesting biography of More. The full story of the man, his friends and enemies, is well presented in this semi-fictionalized narration. It is historically accurate and the use of the first person narrative gives unusual vividness to the already interesting story of St. Thomas More.

It is quite unusual for an orthodox Jew to enter the Catholic Church, still most unusual for the convert to become a priest and the founder of a religious order. Such is the history of Father Libermann, who is honored by the title of Venerable. *The Spirit of Venerable Libermann*, written by one of his spiritual sons, Bishop Gay, is a summary of his life and teaching. The first

section is a brief sketch of his life; the second and largest part is a full explanation of Libermann's doctrine of spiritual abandonment; the last section contains selections from his writings. A well written book that will help its readers to understand the basic doctrine of abandonment.

Sister M. Assumpta O'Hanlon, O.P., has written the life of *St. Dominic Servant But Friend* from a new viewpoint. Basing her inquiry upon the words of Dante about St. Dominic as "friend fast-knit to Christ," she writes of Dominic's friendship with Christ as the keynote of his whole life. This is an historically accurate biography of the great friend of Christ and Mary. The author also points out the similarity of evils, Albigensianism and Communism, and also the sameness of remedy, the rosary.

*Schoolteacher and Saint* is the biography of St. Lucy Filippini, the Italian nun who died in 1732 and who was canonized in 1930. Foundress of a religious community, the Religious Teachers Filippini, St. Lucy was a valiant and heroic woman who shouldered her cross, and an educator years ahead of her time in her ideas of education and Catholic Action. Another good biography.

*Brother Isidore, Saintly Laybrother* was a Passionist lay-brother in Belgium who attained to extraordinary holiness by the performance of his ordinary tasks. A well written biography that should appeal to all religious and to all laypeople who need the inspiration of the example of a man who did humble and monotonous tasks well.

From out of the squalor and suffering of the Korean prison camps comes *The Story of Chaplain Kapaun*. A priest of the Wichita diocese, Father Kapaun became a chaplain in the Army and was captured by the North Koreans. The story of his heroic life is told by many of the officers who knew and admired him in the midst of the hardships of the prison camp. The author, Father Arthur Tonne, is pastor of Father Kapaun's home parish, and has collected

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much information from his parents and friends. All readers will enjoy and be inspired by meeting Father Kapaun.

### CARYLL HOUSELANDER

*The Way of the Cross.* By Caryll Houselander. 173 pp. New York, N.Y.: Sheed and Ward. \$2.75.

In all her writings, Caryll Houselander was preoccupied with the passion of Christ as it is being continued in the Mystical Christ to the end of time. With a few deft strokes the talented English woman sketches the physical and mental anguish of Christ during the sufferings depicted in the fourteen stations of the cross.

The spiritual insight of Miss Houselander is evident in the following beautiful passage: "Now it is easier to understand what it is that brings the incongruous motley of people together to make the Way of the Cross. Each one meets himself on the *Via Crucis*, which is the road through death to life. In Christ he finds the meaning of his own capacity for love. He finds the explanation of himself in Our Lady too, the Mother of Christ in whose soul He is formed perfectly, as He was once formed perfectly in her body. And in those others too, who are taking part in the Passion of the Son of Man—Simon of Cyrene, Magdalene and John, Veronica, the Women of Jerusalem, the Good Thief, the Centurion, the man who lent his tomb, the scattered apostles who crept back, and ran to the empty tomb on the morning of resurrection. Those in whom, through grace and mercy, Christ is being formed, and growing from the darkness of the buried seed to His full flowering."

The Catholic Church has lost a talented writer when Caryll Houselander died last year, but she has gained the fulfillment of love with Christ after her own long way of the Cross.

### PRIESTS

*Tenders of the Flock.* By Leo Trese. 190 pp. New York, N. Y.: Sheed and Ward. \$2.50.

*What to Say to the Penitent* By Charles Hugo Doyle. 276 pp. Tarrytown, N.Y.: The Nugent Press. \$3.50.

Father Leo Trese, the author of *Vessels of Clay* and *A Man Approved*, has just issued another book for the priest, *Tenders of The Flock*. As in the two previous books Father Trese brings a fresh approach, a healthy mingling of the modern with the ageless truths of the priesthood. The titles of some of the chapters give an indication of his style: *The Resolute Priest*, *The Generous Priest*, *The Unsecular Priest*, *The Catholic Priest*, *The Alert Priest*, and *The Perspiring Priest*. The author reveals his very keen sense of observation of the priesthood on the American scene and makes some shrewd and practical suggestions. But, above all, Father Trese seeks to inspire the priest with a sense of his obligations to strive after personal holiness and apostolic zeal. A book to keep handy for browsing by the busy priest.

Father Charles Hugo Doyle begins his book with a quotation from St. Alphonsus: "If all confessors would fulfill the obligations of their office, the whole world would be sanctified. Bad confessors are the ruin of the world." The book, *What to Say to the Penitent*, has been written to give confessors some words of spiritual guidance for their penitents. The reflections, based on the Sunday Epistles and Gospels, are addressed to four different groups: adults, children, religious and clerics. The longest instruction takes only a minute and a half to give. Practical and inspirational are these guides for confessors. The author suggests that this book can be kept in the confessional as a reminder and aid in the fulfillment of the confessor's role as father and director of souls.

Order a Liguorian Pamphlet Office catalogue.

## BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

### I. Suitable for general reading:

- Children's Shepherd—*Burton*  
The Queen is in the Kitchen—*McCarthy*  
Love of Seven Dolls—*Gallico*  
K2; the Savage Mountain—*Houston*  
The Messenger—*Remy*  
Prisoner's Bluff—*Magener*  
The Golden Argosy—*Cartmell*  
The Day Lincoln Was Shot—*Bishop*  
Pray for A Brave Heart—*MacInnes*  
The Captain Leaves His Ship—*Cwiklinski*  
Superstition Corner—*Kaye-Smith*  
Flamingo Feathers—*van der Post*  
Space Tag—*Leinster*  
Joyce Jackson's Guide to Dating—*Jackson*

### II. Suitable only for adults:

- A. Because of advanced style and contents:  
Raft of Despair—*Tiira*  
Song of the Sky—*Murchie*  
The Other Place—*Priestley*  
Life With Groucho—*Marx*  
Foreign Policy Analysis—*Gross*  
Hugh Roy Cullen: A Story of American Opportunity—*Kilman*  
How to Be A Successful Teen-Ager—*Menninger*  
Counseling with Young People—*Morris*  
Candle Against the Sun—*Spearman*  
Smoking and Cancer: A Doctor's Report—*Ochsner*  
Confusion Twice Confounded—*Brady*  
The Red Petticoat—*MacMahon*  
The Cliff's Edge—*Haskett*  
The American Story—*Garrett*  
Gertrude Lawrence as Mrs. A.—*Aldrich*  
Admiral Kimmel's Story—*Kimmel*  
Miss Harriet Townshend—*Norris*  
Abbe Pierre and the Ragpickers of Emmaus—*Simon*  
Meditations of A Believer—*Legaut*  
The Golden String, The Autobiography of Bede Griffiths, Benedictine of Prinknash—*Griffiths*

The Age of Belief: The Medieval Philosophers—*Fremantle*

St. Benedict and His Monks—*Maynard*  
Sincerely, Willis Wayde—*Marquand*  
John Sloan: A Painter's Life—*Brooks*  
Washington Holiday—*Early*  
The Fifth Amendment Today—*Griswold*  
The Situation of Poetry—*Maritain*  
Fellow Passenger—*Household*

### B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:

- My Brother's Keeper—*Davenport*  
The Long Ships—*Bengtsson*  
The Sword of God—*Hardy*  
Hatchet in the Sky—*Gay*  
White Terror of the Atlantic—*Clift*  
The Hero of Saint Roger—*Tickell*  
Catch the Gold Ring—*Strange*  
The Last Hunt—*Lott*  
The Cornerstone—*Oldenbourg*  
The Adventurers—*Haycox*  
The Black Prince—*Grau*  
The Healer—*Slaughter*  
Prize Stories 1955—*Engle*  
The Devil His Due—*O'Farrell*  
The Blue Hurricane—*Mason*  
The Royal Hunt—*Moinot*  
The Best from Fantasy and Science Fiction—*Boucher*  
By Sun and Candlelight—*Campbell*

### III. Permissible for the discriminating reader:

- The French Revolution, 1788-1792—*Salvemini*  
Yankees and God—*Smith*  
Mr. Maugham Himself—*Beecroft*  
The Works of Oscar Wilde—*Maine*  
The Goodly Seed—*Wyllie*  
The Four Winds—*Beaty*

### IV. Not recommended to any reader:

- To Find A Killer—*White*  
Benton's Row—*Yerby*  
Make the Most of Yourself—*Steiner*  
The Immoralist—*Gide*  
All Men Are Mortal—*Beauvoir*  
Of Time and the Calendar—*Achelis*



## *Lucid Intervals*

Joe: "You sure have a way with the girls. What's your secret?"

Jack: "Flattery, man, just a little flattery. Last night my girl and I were out walking. She got a fly in her eye and I said, 'No wonder, I don't see how a fly could miss such big eyes.'"

Joe (two days later): "Your secret's the bunk. My girl got a fly in her mouth."

A foreigner stood in the Moscow "Louvre" looking at two portraits hanging side by side.

"Who is that?" he asked the guide, pointing to one.

"Gorochow."

"Who is Gorochow?"

"You don't know that?" asked the guide in surprise. "He is a great genius. He invented the locomotive, radio, airplanes . . . ."

"And who is the other?"

"That is Mandschukowski."

"And what is he famous for?"

"Oh, he invented Gorochow."

A farmer wrote to a mail-order company as follows:

"Please send me one of those gasoline engines that you show on Page 707, and if it's any good I'll send you a check for it."

He received the following reply:

"Please send us the check, and if it's any good we'll send you the engine."

"Now, boys and girls," said the teacher, "I want you to be very still—so still that you can hear a pin drop."

For a minute all was still, and then a little boy shrieked out: "Okay, Okay, let it drop!"

A very fat man and a very thin man met in a cafe.

"From the looks of you there might have been a famine," joked the fat man.

"Yes," replied the thin man. "And from the looks of you, you might have caused it."

The teacher was talking to the class on "thirsting after righteousness." After spending half an hour trying to put across the idea, he said: "Some people thirst after knowledge, some after money, some after fame. Now what do you boys thirst after?"

One lad piped up: "I thirst after salted peanuts."

Five men were ordering breakfast.

"I'll have pancakes," said the first.

"Hot cakes," said the second.

"Wheat cakes," said the third.

"Griddle cakes," said the fourth.

The last man looked around with a puzzled expression.

"They're all synonyms, aren't they?" he asked.

"No," said the waiter. "But if you want synonym I can give you a bun."

Cross-examiner: "You seem to have plenty of intelligence for a man in your position."

Witness: "If I wasn't under oath, I'd return the compliment."

"With a car like that," the mechanic advised the young college freshman, "I'd advise you to keep it moving."

"Why?" asked the youth.

"Well," was the reply, "If you ever come to a complete stop, some cop is going to think it's an accident."

## Amongst Ourselves

It is necessary for us to thank, in this general way, the scores of readers who have written to us under the inspiration of the letter from the twenty-nine-year-old mother, published in the March LIGUORIAN, who insisted on her need of practicing birth-prevention. A few of these letters are published in this issue of THE LIGUORIAN, not in Readers Retort, but under the title, "Against Birth-Control." We wish we had room to publish ten or twenty more. We assure the writers who asked that their letters be forwarded to N.N., the writer of the original letter, that their wishes will be complied with in this instance.

These letters give marvelous testimony to the power of the grace of God and the unswerving loyalty of many Catholic mothers to the divine code laid down for Christian marriage. Only one letter out of a hundred is rebellious and embittered, stating that its writer is giving up the sacraments in favor of habitual birth-prevention. A few letters take us to task for not giving enough spiritual advice in our published reply to N.N. The rest are personal accounts of how their writers faced the same or similar temptations as N.N., and succeeded in remaining loyal to God, or they are words of encouragement to N.N., from wives who have been permitted by God to

have only one or two living children at all. In due time we may publish a brochure of these letters, because if anyone ever doubted that it is possible for husbands and wives to be faithful to God's law forbidding birth-prevention, he would find the answer to his doubts in these letters. Many Catholic parents may have fallen and given up their souls to sin and to God's wrath, but many more, we believe, have been untouched by the spirit and the principles and the propaganda of the pagan world around them.

Some of the practical articles that will appear in THE LIGUORIAN over the next few months will have the following titles: "What Work Is Forbidden on Sunday?" — "Two in One Spirit — Impossible in Mixed Marriage" — "Come Back Now" a plea to lapsed or sinful Catholics not to delay making a good confession; "Fortune-Tellers and Spiritists" — "What Every Priest Has to Know" — "Why Catholics Go to Mass on Sunday" — "How to Know the True Church" — "How to Analyze Your Children." Assure yourself of a chance to read these and many other similar articles by renewing your subscription promptly, or, if you are not a subscriber, by sending \$2.00 now to THE LIGUORIAN, Liguori, Mo.

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## FOR MARY'S MONTH

Readers of *The Liguorian* who would like to do something during May to increase their devotion to the Mother of God are hereby offered the opportunity to subscribe for *Perpetual Help*, published, like *The Liguorian*, by the Redemptorist Fathers of Liguori, Missouri.

*Perpetual Help* magazine is a thirty-two-page monthly publication that offers meditation-material on the place God chose for Mary in the plan of salvation, letters from readers attesting to favors received through their persevering prayers to Our Mother of Perpetual Help, and reports from some of the thousands of shrines where public devotions are held each week.

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